



80

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN







DO THE
POLICE
KNOW?

NOPE.
CAME
STRAIGHT
TO YOU. JUST
LIKE YOU
ASKED.

GOOD. GIVE
ME HALF AN
HOUR, THEN CALL
THE COPS.



DO YOU
MIND IF
WE ASK
WHY?



BECAUSE
I GODDAMN
SAID SO,
THAT'S
WHY.



ASS-
WIPE.

A CITY IS A LOT
LIKE A PERSON,
IF YOU THINK
ABOUT IT...

IT LIVES AND BREATHES AND GROWS. IT HAS ITS OWN UNIQUE ANATOMY. ITS OWN CHARMS AND IDIOSYNCRASIES.

BY ITS VERY NATURE, IT MUST KILL AND DEVOUR IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.

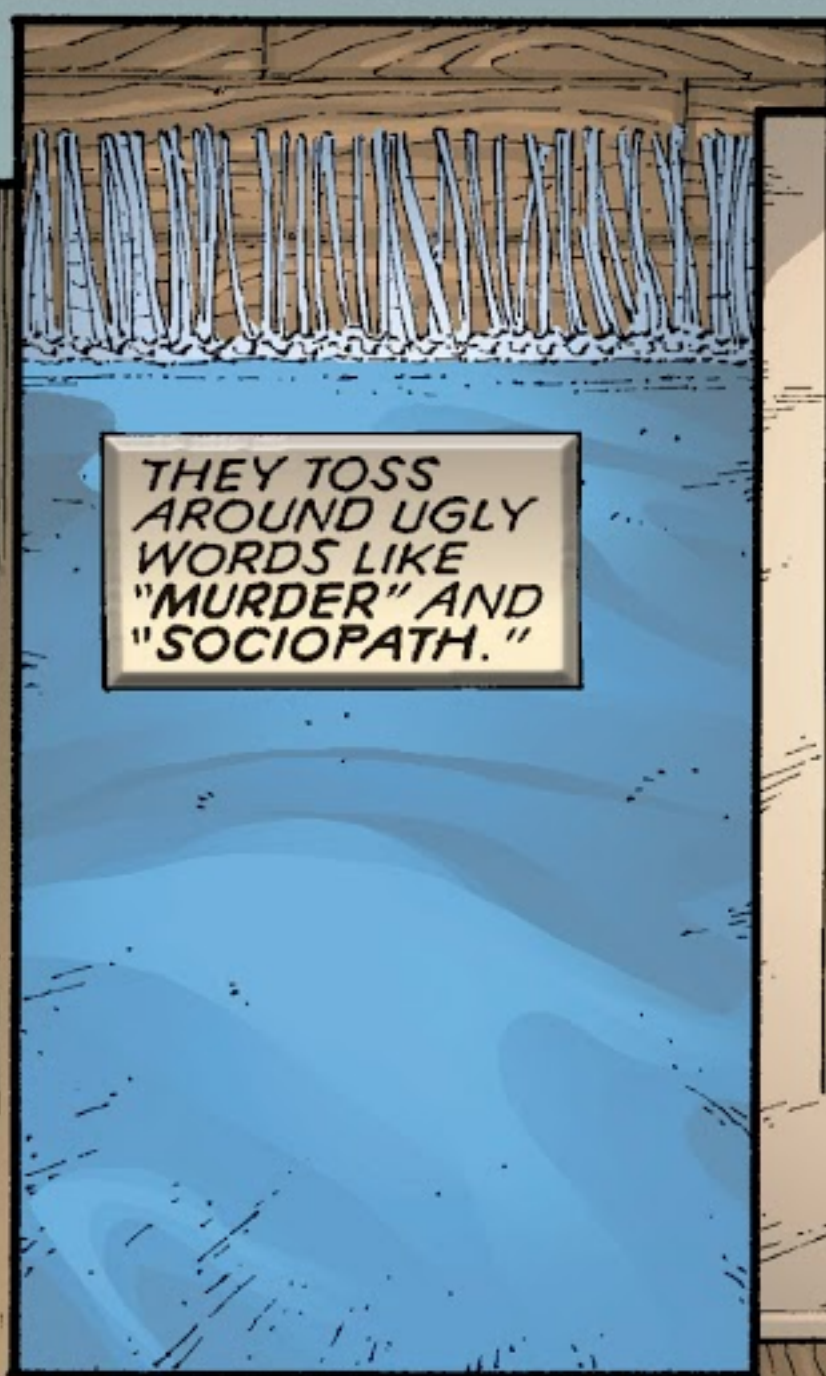
SOMETIMES IT IS FACED BY MALIGNANCIES. PARASITES. CANCERS.

SOME CAN BE TREATED. OR CONTAINED.

BUT OTHERS MUST BE ELIMINATED. ERADICATED FROM THE HOST SO THAT THE BETTER, MORE DESERVING ORGANS MAY THRIVE. THEY MUST BE CLEANSED.

THE KILLER KNOWS THIS, DEEP IN HER HEART. UNDERSTANDS IT AT A PRIMAL LEVEL. IT IS THE ONLY WAY TO BUILD A BETTER, MORE PRISTINE WORLD.

THE MEN ON THE TV HAVE BEEN SAYING TERRIBLE THINGS ABOUT HER, ABOUT HER ACTIONS.



THEY TOSS AROUND UGLY WORDS LIKE "MURDER" AND "SOCIOPATH."

THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND. IT IS THANKLESS WORK. COLD, CLINICAL AND NECESSARY.

BUT SHE DOESN'T DO IT FOR UNDERSTANDING OR FOR RECOGNITION.

SHE DOES IT BECAUSE NO ONE ELSE WILL.

DR. SARAH FROST EMERGES FROM THE SHOWER, HER SEVENTH OF THE DAY. SHE FEELS RENEWED, ALMOST REBORN.

SHE DRINKS IN THE FILTERED, RAREFIED AIR. IT IS FREE FROM THE TAINTS OF THE CITY. THE TOXIC GRIME THAT FILLS ITS SKIES, THE SICKENING SCENT OF OTHER PEOPLE.

IT IS ONLY AT THESE MOMENTS SHE FEELS TRULY SAFE.

TRULY COMFORTABLE INSIDE HER SKIN.

SHE FEELS ALIVE AND RADIANT BENEATH THE WARM GLOW OF HALOGEN LIGHTS.

Huh?

THAT COMFORT WILL PROVE SHORT-LIVED.

EEEE!
GET OFF ME!



No!
GET OFF!
GET OFF!

THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE,
SHE THINKS. HER
SAFE, ANTISEPTIC
LITTLE WORLD HAS
BEEN BREACHED.

LIGHTNING
FLASHES AND
THE WORLD
TURNS DARK.

No! No!
GET OFF!
WHERE
ARE THEY
COMING
FROM?

Dr. FROST
PANICS,
HER HEART
POUNDING.

SHE FEELS
SICK.
VIOLATED.

SHE STUMBLES IN THE DARKNESS
AND FALLS TO THE GROUND.
AROUND HER SHE HEARS THE
NAUSEATING SOUND OF HUNDREDS
OF TINY LEGS SKITTERING
ALL ABOUT HER.

No! No!
STOP IT!
NO!



ANOTHER FLASH OF
LIGHTNING ILLUMINATES
THE ROOM AND SHE
REALIZES SHE IS NOT
ALONE. THERE IS SOME-
ONE THERE, WATCHING.



FROM SOMEWHERE
NEAR, SHE HEARS THE
RATTLE OF CHAINS,
THE FLUTTERING OF
HEAVY CLOTH.



HER PUPILS DILATE,
ADJUSTING TO THE
DARK. AND THEN
SHE SEES...



**SARAH
FROST!**
IT'S TIME TO
ANSWER
FOR YOUR
CRIMES!



CHRIST. WHAT DO YOU THINK HE'S DOING IN THERE? I DON'T LIKE THE STINK OF THIS. AND WHAT WAS THAT CRAP? " 'COS I SAID SO."

DEAL OR NO DEAL, HE DON'T TALK TO US LIKE THAT. BETTER GET THAT STRAIGHT.



YES, SIR. I WAS QUITE IMPRESSED BY THE WAY YOU STOOD UP TO HIM. VERY BRAVE.

JEEZ, TWITCH! WHAT'S EATING YOU? THIS IS HARD ENOUGH WITHOUT YOU TAKING SHOTS AT ME.



FORGIVE ME, SIR. GALLOWS HUMOR, I SUPPOSE.

YEAH. OKAY. DON'T WORRY 'BOUT IT.

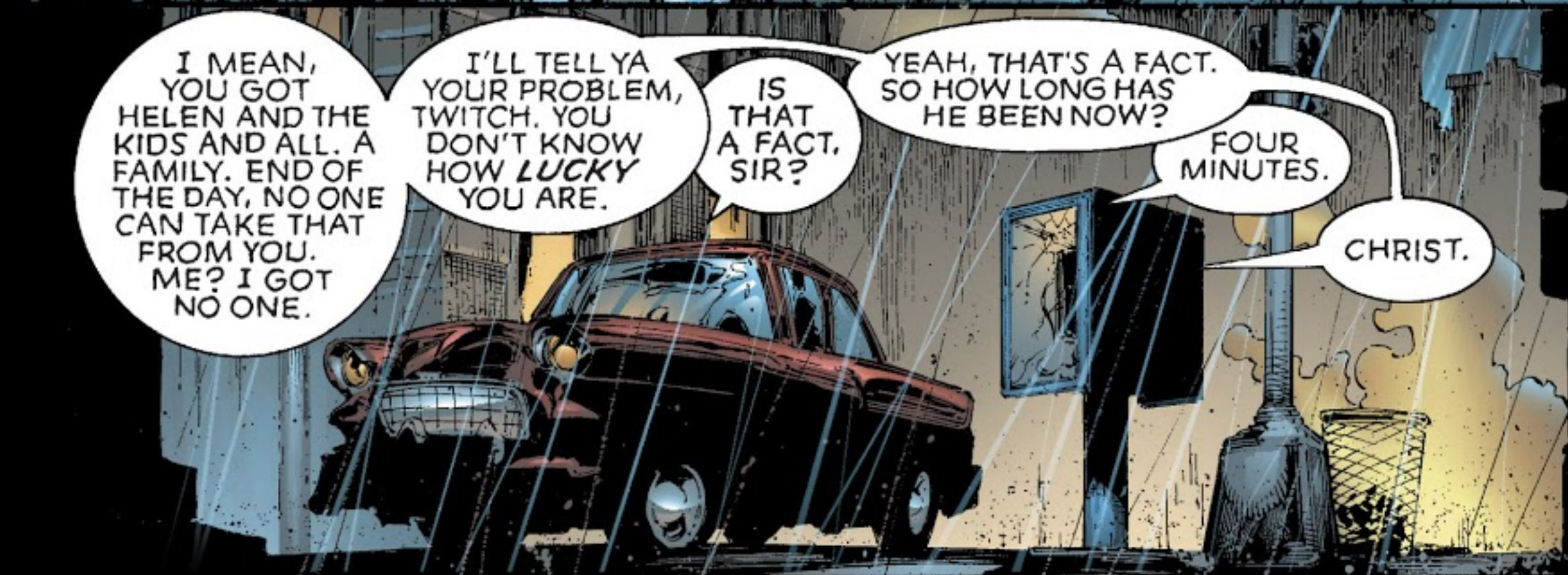


>Sigh< IT'S JUST... SHE WAS *NICE* TO ME, Y'KNOW? TREATED ME LIKE I WASN'T JUST SOME MOOK. THAT HASN'T HAPPENED MUCH IN MY LIFE.

JUST MY LUCK SHE TURNS OUT TO BE A SPREE-KILLING *PSYCHO*.

Hmm. IT'S ALWAYS SOMETHING, ISN'T IT?

KNOCK IT OFF. WHEN'D YOU DECIDE YOU HAD A SENSE OF HUMOR ANYWAY? HUH? GUYS LIKE YOU... YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE.



I MEAN, YOU GOT HELEN AND THE KIDS AND ALL. A FAMILY. END OF THE DAY, NO ONE CAN TAKE THAT FROM YOU. ME? I GOT NO ONE.

I'LL TELL YA YOUR PROBLEM, TWITCH. YOU DON'T KNOW HOW *LUCKY* YOU ARE.

IS THAT A FACT, SIR?

YEAH, THAT'S A FACT. SO HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN NOW?

FOUR MINUTES.

CHRIST.

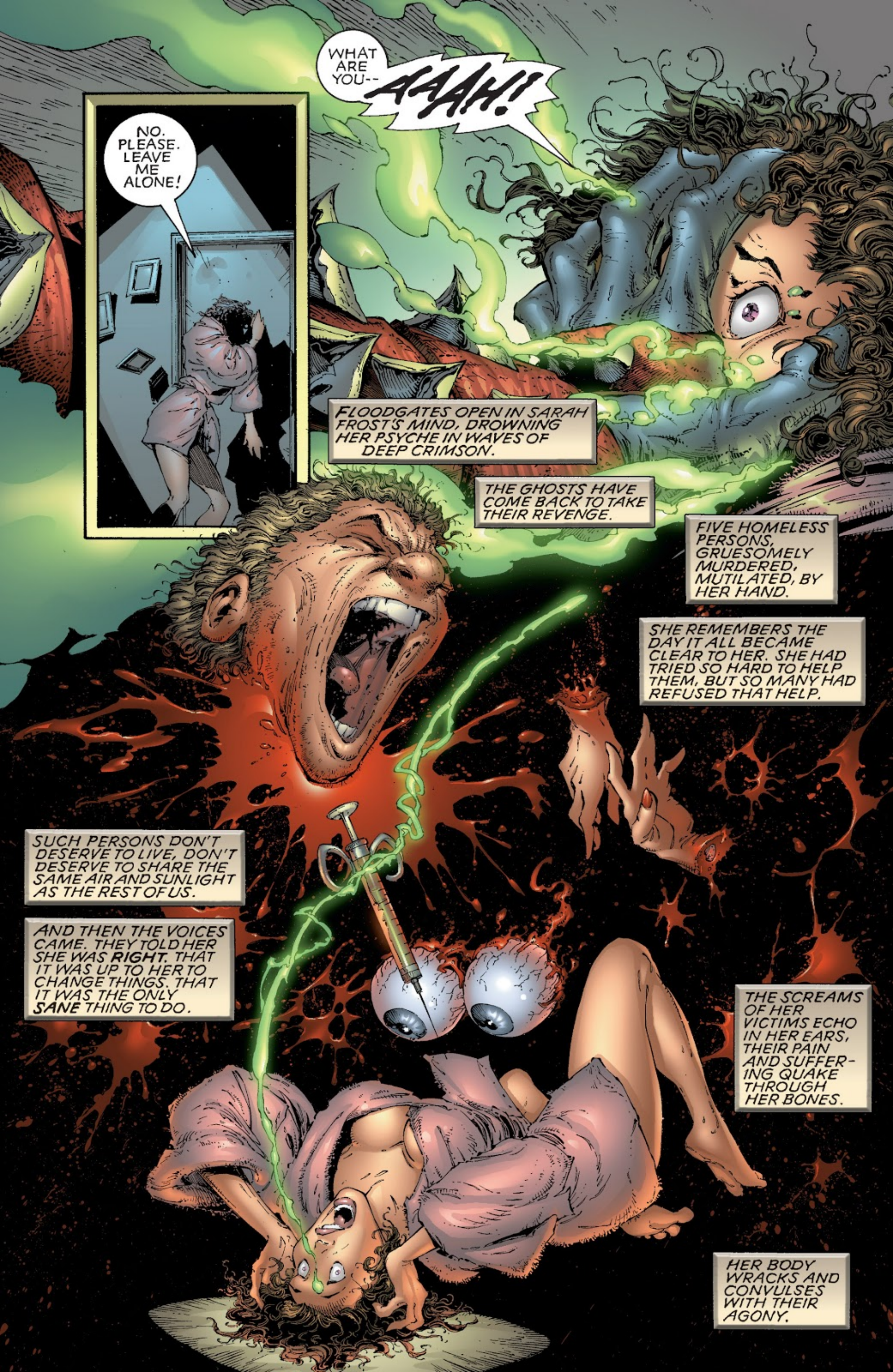


WHO-
WHO ARE
YOU? WHAT
DO YOU
WANT
WITH ME?

TELL
ME WHY,
SARAH.
WHY DID
YOU DO
IT?

I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE TALKING
ABOUT. GET
AWAY FROM ME!
SOMEBODY
HELLP!

SHOUT
ALL YOU WANT.
NO ONE'S
COMING TO
HELP YOU. YOU
CAN'T RUN
FROM ME.



NO.
PLEASE.
LEAVE
ME
ALONE!

WHAT
ARE
YOU--

AAAAH!

FLOODGATES OPEN IN SARAH
FROST'S MIND, DROWNING
HER PSYCHE IN WAVES OF
DEEP CRIMSON.

THE GHOSTS HAVE
COME BACK TO TAKE
THEIR REVENGE.

FIVE HOMELESS
PERSONS,
GRUESOMELY
MURDERED,
MUTILATED, BY
HER HAND.

SHE REMEMBERS THE
DAY IT ALL BECAME
CLEAR TO HER. SHE HAD
TRIED SO HARD TO HELP
THEM, BUT SO MANY HAD
REFUSED THAT HELP.

SUCH PERSONS DON'T
DESERVE TO LIVE, DON'T
DESERVE TO SHARE THE
SAME AIR AND SUNLIGHT
AS THE REST OF US.

AND THEN THE VOICES
CAME. THEY TOLD HER
SHE WAS RIGHT. THAT
IT WAS UP TO HER TO
CHANGE THINGS. THAT
IT WAS THE ONLY
SANE THING TO DO.

THE SCREAMS
OF HER
VICTIMS ECHO
IN HER EARS,
THEIR PAIN
AND SUFFER-
ING SHAKE
THROUGH
HER BONES.

HER BODY
WRACKS AND
CONVULSES
WITH THEIR
AGONY.

HOW DOES IT FEEL,
SARAH? TO BE SO
HELPLESS. TO KNOW
THAT NO ONE IS
COMING TO YOUR
RESCUE...

PLEASE...
PLEASE...
STOP...

...TO
KNOW YOUR
PATHETIC LIFE
IS AT AN
END...

NO!

AAARGGH!

WE'RE
NOT
GOING TO
STOP.

THREE NIGHTS
AGO... THE LAST
VICTIM...
BARELY MORE
THAN A CHILD...

HER NAME WAS
FAWN. SARAH
HAD TRIED HARD
TO GET HER OFF
THE STREET. SHE
HAD INVESTED
HOURS IN HELP-
ING THIS GIRL,
ALL FOR NOTHING.

SHE WOULD HAVE TO PAY.

I'VE BEEN WORRIED
ABOUT YOU. IT'S KEEP-
ING ME UP NIGHTS.

JUST
SOMEWHERE
WE CAN TALK.
DON'T WORRY,
IT'LL ALL BE OKAY
SOON. ARE YOU
HUNGRY?

WHERE
ARE WE
GOING?

SARAH DROVE HER TO AN
OLD WAREHOUSE AND
SHOWED HER THE PENALTY
FOR HER ACTIONS.

YOU STUPID,
UNGRATEFUL
LITTLE BITCH!

WHAT?!
WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?!

AAH!
LET GO!

THE LITTLE
BRAT ACTUAL-
LY LOOKED
SURPRISED.
BETRAYED.
DIDN'T SHE
REALIZE SHE
HAD BROUGHT
IT ALL ON
HERSELF?

THE GIRL STRUGGLED, TRIED
TO ESCAPE. BUT SHE NEVER
STOOD A CHANCE.

SARAH CUT FAWN'S THROAT AND
WATCHED HER DIE. LISTENED AS
THE GIRL'S LAST, PATHETIC CRIES
FOR MERCY GURGLED WEAKLY
FROM HER SEVERED THROAT.

AND THEN SHE EXTRACTED FAWN'S
STILL-BEATING HEART AS A
TROPHY. AND AS A WARNING TO
OTHERS: CHANGE OR DIE.

TELL ME
WHY, DOCTOR
FROST. WHAT
WERE YOU
AFRAID OF?

WHAT IS IT
THAT SCARES
YOU MOST? WHAT
IS IT THAT MAKES
YOU SCREAM!

AA
AEE!

THEY CRAWL ALL
OVER HER... UNDER
HER ROBE... IN HER
HAIR... THOUSANDS
OF THEM. THEY
BURROW UNDER
HER FLESH...

SHE SLAPS AND
SCRATCHES AND
POUNDS AT THEM,
SOFT LAYERS OF
HER OWN FLESH
COLLECTING
BENEATH HER
MANICURED
NAILS...

GET 'EM
OFF! GET
'EM OFF
ME!

PLEASE!
PLEASE
STOP
IT!

AS SARAH
FROST
EXPERIENCES
HER BLACKEST
NIGHTMARE
BROUGHT TO
LIFE, SOME-
THING IN HER
MIND
SWITCHES
OVER...



I'M
BEGGING
YOU,
**STOP
IT!**

SHUT UP!
YOU ARE NOT
ALLOWED
TO **BEG!**

IT WAS HER ALL ALONG. SHE
SEES THAT NOW. THE VOICES
ONLY TOLD HER WHAT SHE
WANTED TO HEAR.

AND SOMEHOW, SHE
KNOWS THEY'RE NOW
LAUGHING AT HER.

THE INSECTS CONTINUE TO
MULTIPLY, COVERING EVERY
INCH OF HER FLESH.

BILE RISES IN HER THROAT... FEAR
PUSHES HER TO THE BRINK OF MADNESS...

"HOW COULD THIS BE
HAPPENING?" SHE
THINKS... "I WAS A
GOOD PERSON...
HOW COULD I..."

"HOW COULD
I HAVE
DONE THIS..."

HER KITCHEN PANTRY HOLDS AN ARSENAL OF CLEANING SUPPLIES. ONE CAN NEVER BE TOO CAREFUL...

SHE EMPTIES CAN AFTER CAN OF PESTICIDE, BUT THEY KEEP COMING...

THE NOXIOUS SPRAY SEARS HER EYES, SEEPS INTO HER OPEN WOUNDS, STINGING AND BURNING HER TENDER FLESH...

UGGHN...

HER MOUTH IS CLOGGED WITH VERMIN... HER TONGUE WEIGHTED DOWN BY COUNTLESS INSECTS...

SHE CAN BARELY SEE NOW... EYE-LIDS SWOLLEN, HER VISION BLOCKED BY THIS CREEPING VEIL OF PESTILENCE...

SHE MAKES ONE LAST PANICKED GESTURE, HOPING FOR MERCY... FOR FORGIVENESS...

SHE RECEIVES NEITHER.



FORTY-FIVE MINUTES LATER:

HEY, HEY! HERE'S THE BOYS OF THE HOUR...

HEYA, SILBERT.

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU CLOWNS DID IT, BUT YOU ACTUALLY MANAGED TO SOLVE A REAL CASE. THANKS FOR MAKING US LOOK BAD.

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. SHE HAD FILES ON ALL THE VICTIMS, WE MATCHED THE TYPEWRITER, EVEN FOUND SOME WHACKED-OUT JOURNALS OF HERS.

MOST ORGANIZED KILLER I EVER SEEN. FREAKY STUFF, MAN. THIS LITTLE LADY WAS ONE CERTIFIED, U.S.D.A.-SELECT, GRADE-"A" NUT-JOB.

JUST FOLLOWED MY GUT. SO SHE REALLY WAS THE KILLER?



HEY, TWITCHIE! YOU DOIN', MAN? GOOD TO SEE YOU BACK ON YOUR FEET.

MARX, ANDREWS. HOW'VE YOU BEEN?

OKAY. HOW YOU FEELING? THEY LET YOU KEEP THAT BULLET TO TAKE HOME WITH YOU?

IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING. IT'S RIGHT WHERE THEY LEFT IT, GENTLEMEN.

WHOA! YOU'RE KIDDIN' ME!

CHECK IT OUT! THE MAN WITH THE HOLLOW POINT BRAIN.

IT'S THE SOURCE OF ALL MY POWERS.





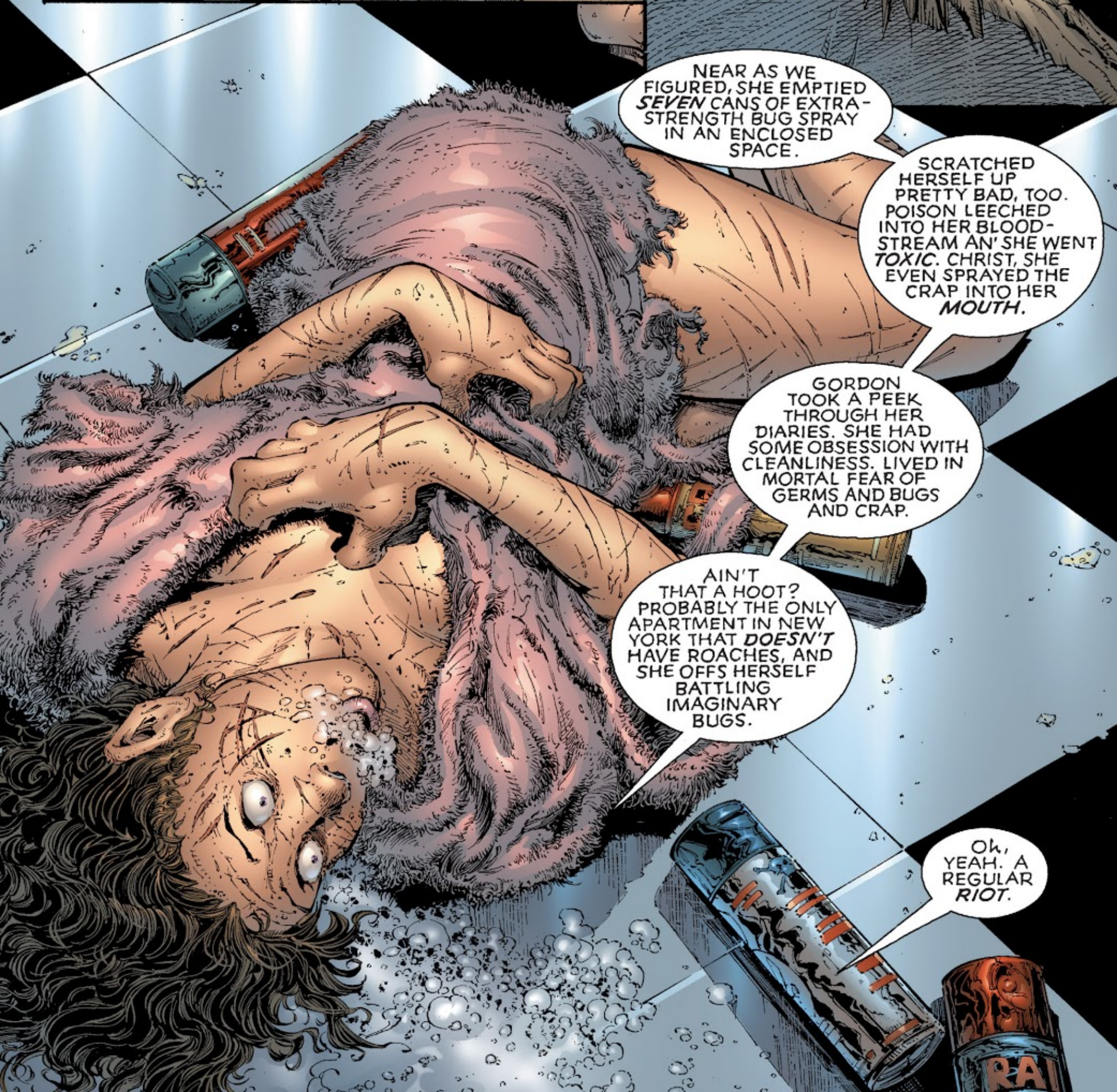
Heh!
GOOD
ONE,
TWITCH.

COME ON,
KIDS. LET'S
GO MEET OUR
LOVELY
HOSTESS.

EXCUSE
ME, GENTLE-
MEN.



HERE
SHE IS.
WHAT A
BEAUT,
kuh?



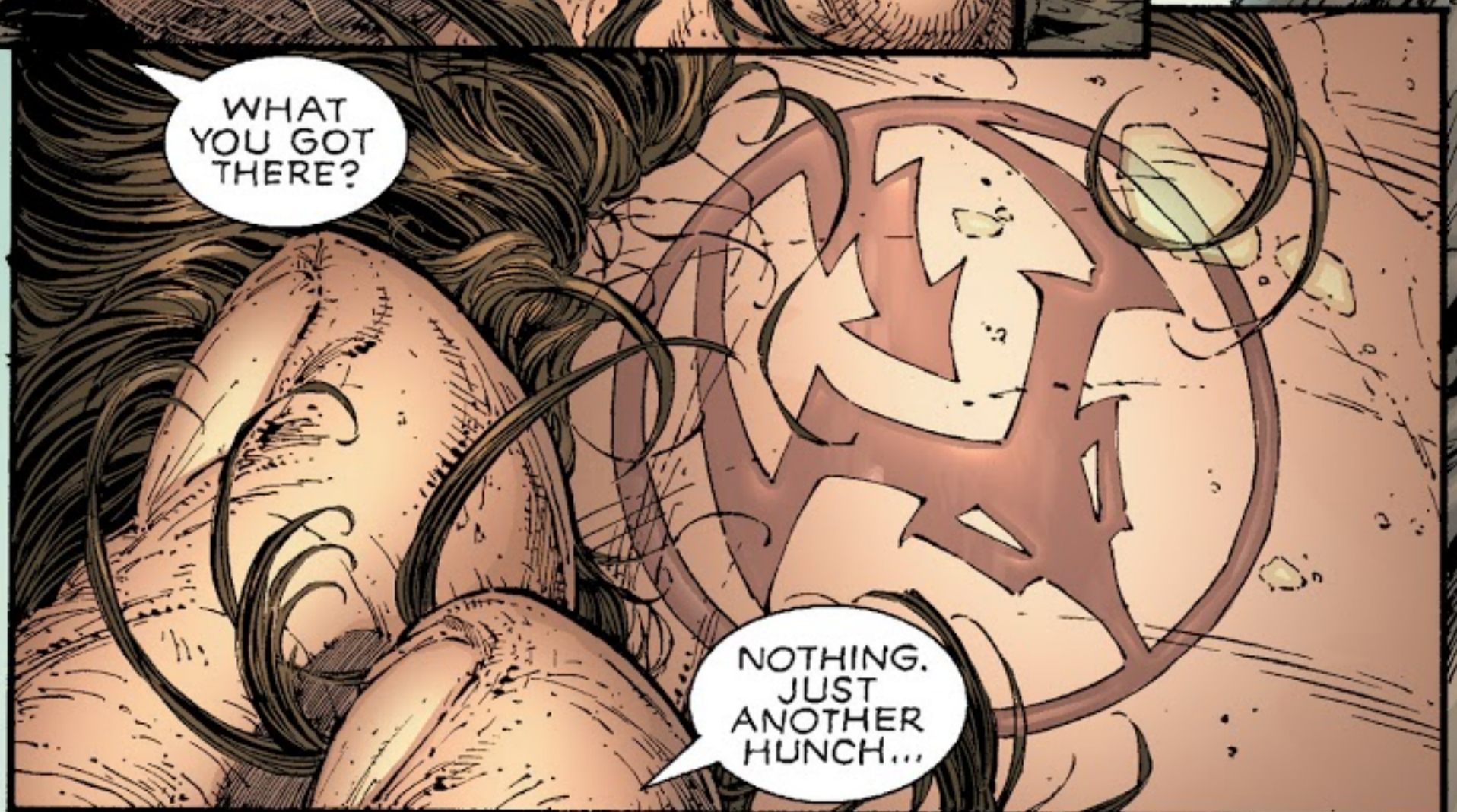
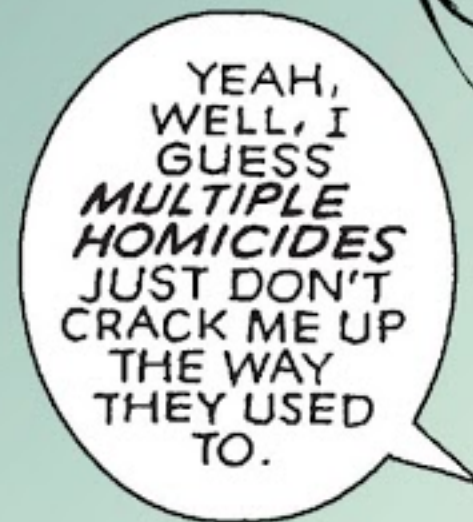
NEAR AS WE
FIGURED, SHE EMPTIED
SEVEN CANS OF EXTRA-
STRENGTH BUG SPRAY
IN AN ENCLOSED
SPACE.

SCRATCHED
HERSELF UP
PRETTY BAD, TOO.
POISON LEECHED
INTO HER BLOOD-
STREAM AN' SHE WENT
TOXIC. CHRIST, SHE
EVEN SPRAYED THE
CRAP INTO HER
MOUTH.

GORDON
TOOK A PEEK
THROUGH HER
DIARIES. SHE HAD
SOME OBSESSION WITH
CLEANLINESS. LIVED IN
MORTAL FEAR OF
GERMS AND BUGS
AND CRAP.

AIN'T
THAT A HOOT?
PROBABLY THE ONLY
APARTMENT IN NEW
YORK THAT **DOESN'T**
HAVE ROACHES, AND
SHE OFFS HERSELF
BATTLING
IMAGINARY
BUGS.

Oh,
YEAH. A
REGULAR
RIOT.







DO YOU
FEEL THE
MAYOR IS
DOING ENOUGH
TO ADDRESS
THE ISSUE OF
HOMELESS-
NESS?



HAVE
EITHER
OF YOU
CONSIDERED
RUNNING FOR
PUBLIC
OFFICE?



WERE YOU
CONTACTED BY
AN OUTSIDE
PARTY TO LOOK
INTO THESE
MURDERS?



WHAT
ARE YOU
PLANNING
TO DO
NEXT?



SPAWN ALLEY.
THE NEXT
EVENING.



I DON'T
WANT TO HEAR
IT, COG. I DID
WHAT I HAD TO
DO. SHE WAS A
COLD-BLOODED
KILLER.



I KNOW
YOU THINK
THAT. BUT
I BELIEVE
THERE'S
BIGGER
GOINGS-
ON.



I MANAGED
TO DECODE MORE
OF THE PASSAGE
ON THE **STRANGE**
MARKING YOU
SAW IN THE
MORGUE...



IT'S
OVER,
COG.



THAT'S
JUST IT. I
DON'T THINK
IT **IS**
OVER.

EPILOGUE.

"DETECTIVE DUO AWARDED COMMENDATION. PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS CITED BY MAYOR FOR CRACKING 'EXTERMINATOR' CASE..."

VERY, FLATTERING, SIR.

DON'T SELL YOURSELF SHORT, BUDDY. NOW, YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS, DON'T YA?

YOU'RE RENEWING YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO THE TIMES?

MEANS WE'RE *FINALLY* GOING SOMEWHERE. NO MORE NICKEL-AND-DIMIN' IT. WE'VE TURNED THE CORNER, BUDDY.

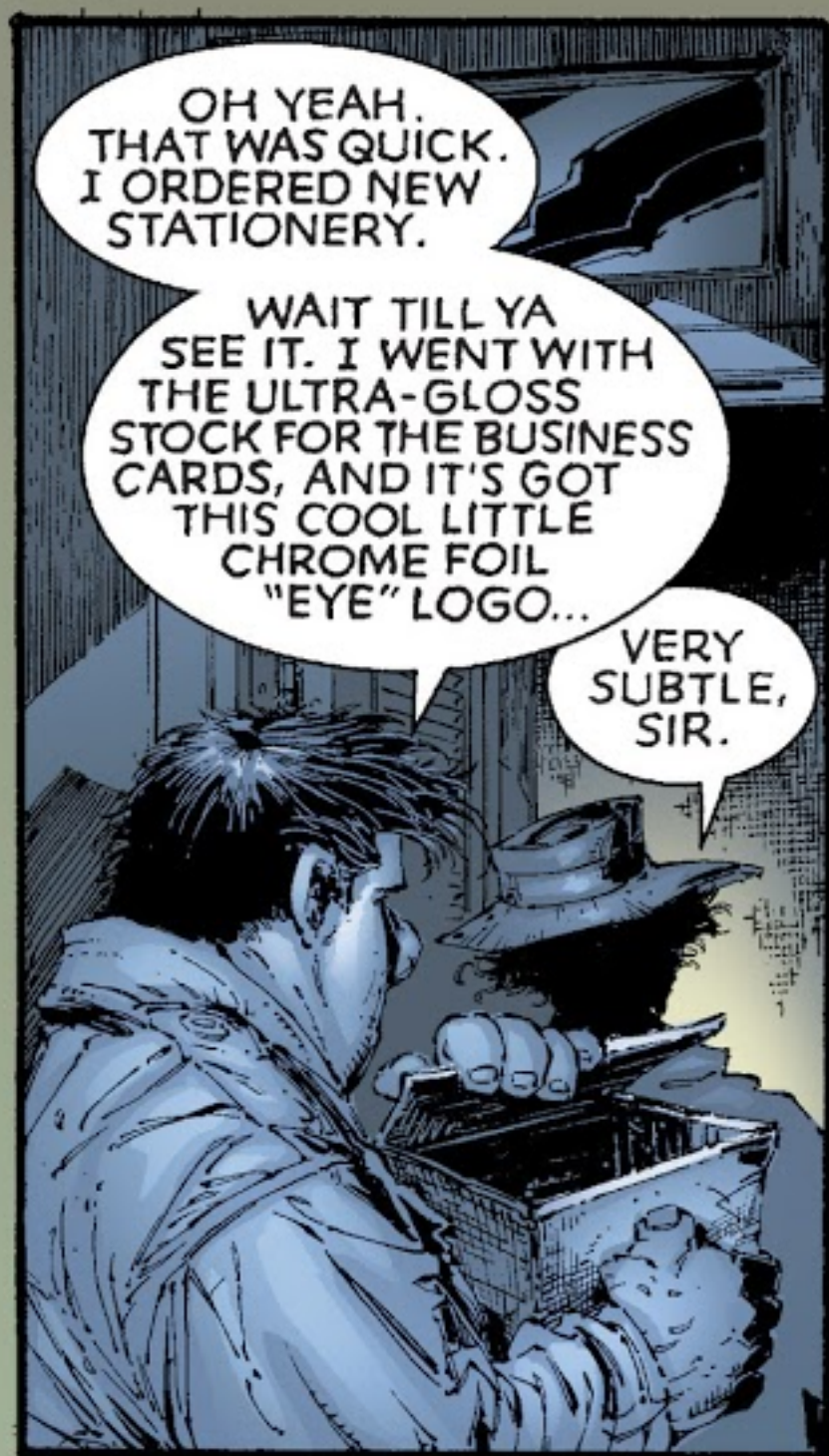
WE'RE GONNA BE THE TIFFANY'S OF DETECTIVE AGENCIES.

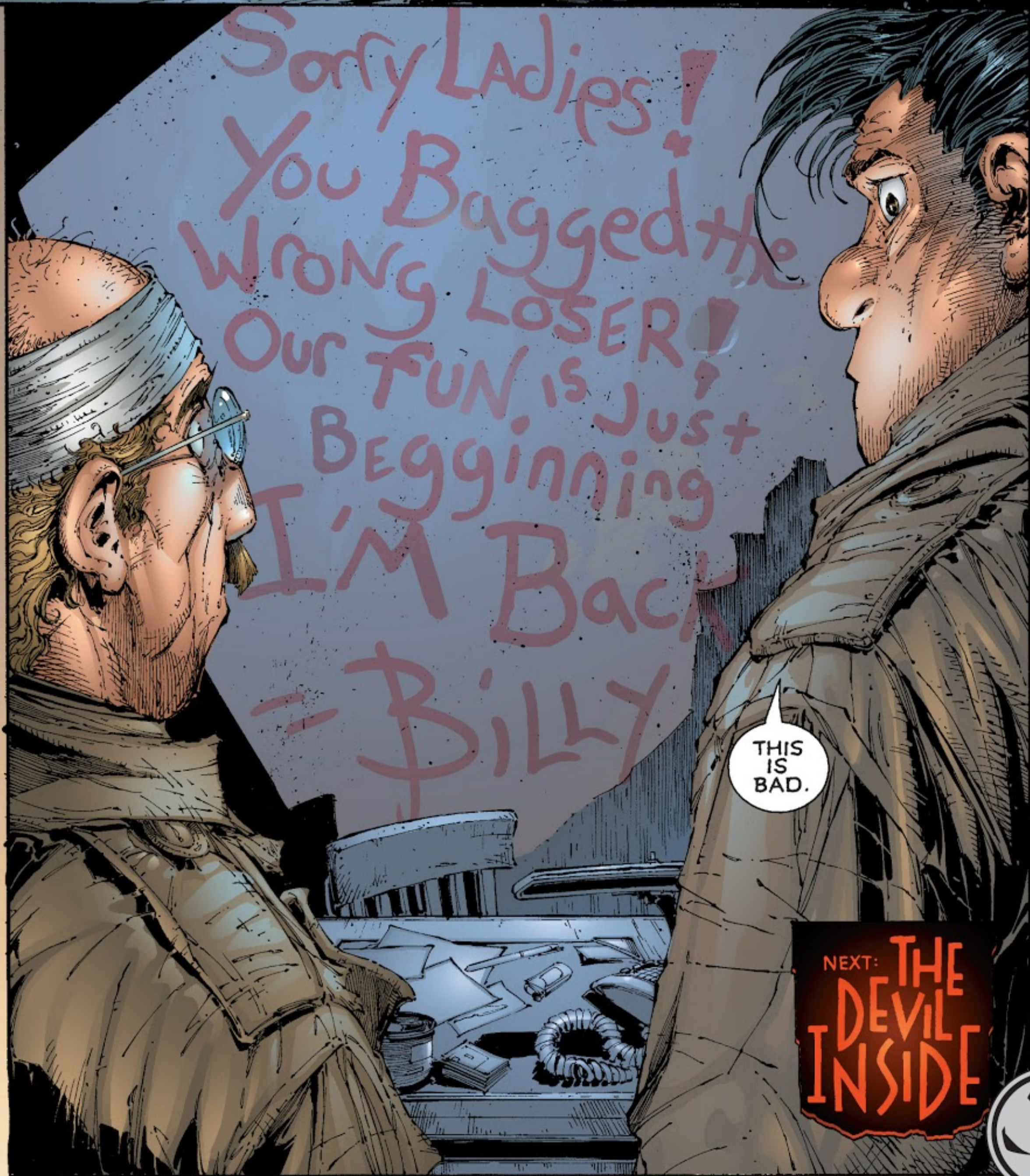
UPSCALE OFFICES... CELEBRITY CLIENTELE... PHAT ASSIGNMENTS...

"PHAT"?

YOU KNOW, COOL. EXCELLENT. SUPERLATIVE. IT'S WHAT ALL THE KIDS ARE SAYING THESE DAYS.

THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO, SIR.







81

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN



Capullo 99

D:

MFARIANF
70

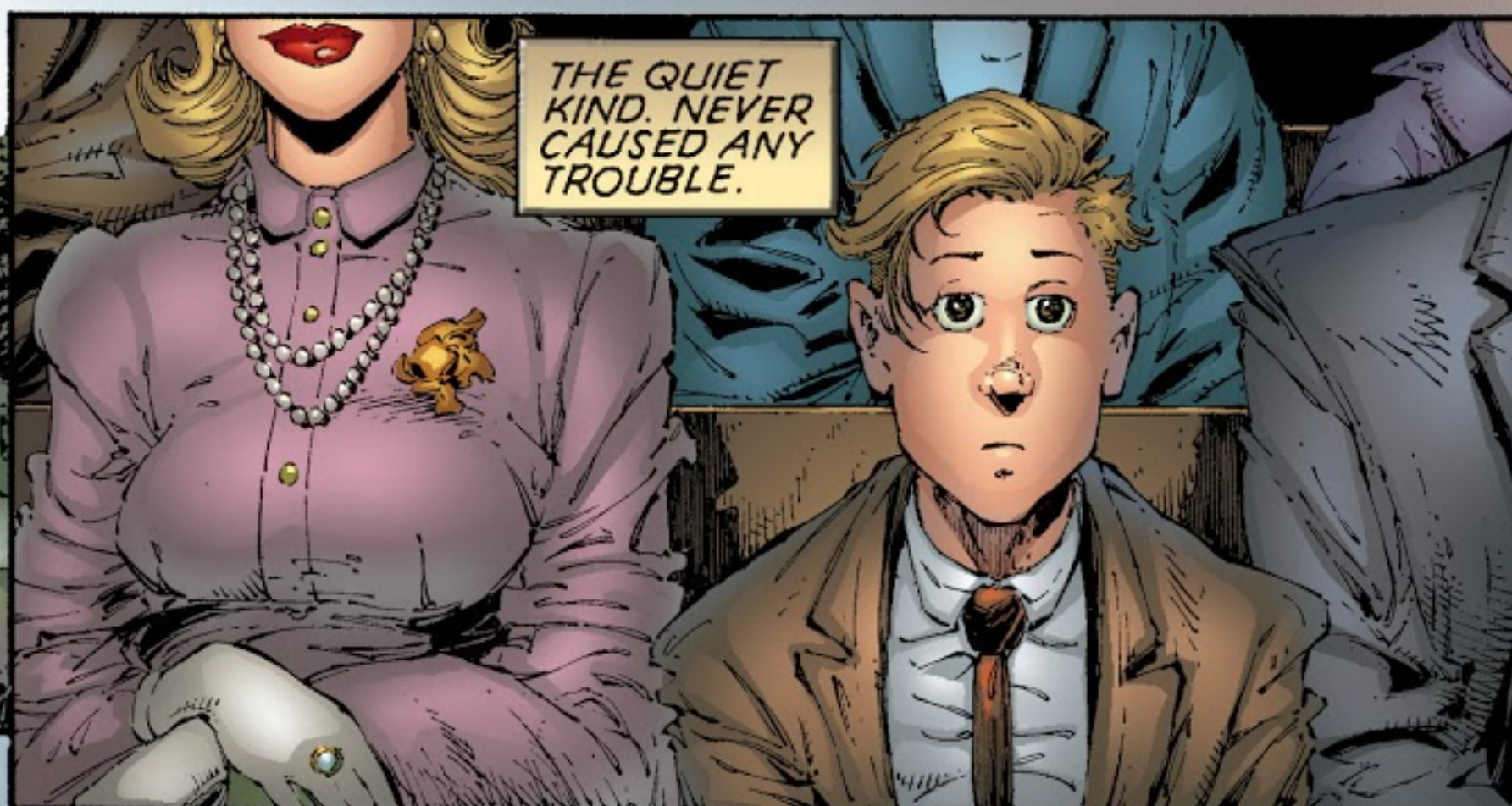
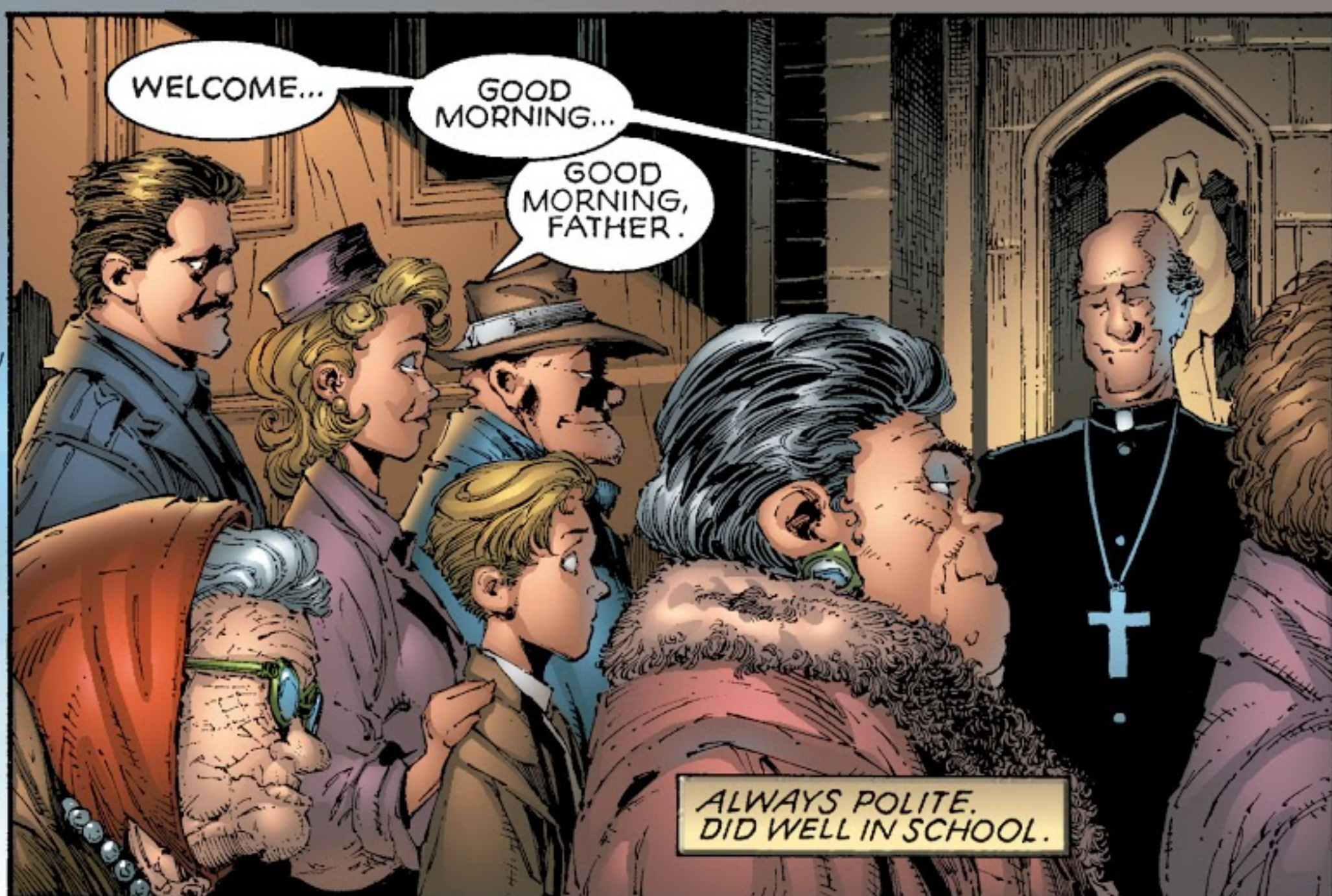
MERRICK,
LONG ISLAND.





WHEN IT'S
ALL OVER,
EVERYONE
WILL AGREE.

MARK LUCAS
WAS A
GOOD KID.



NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO
UNDERSTAND WHY ONE
CLEAR WINTER MORNING,
HE JUST SEEMED TO SNAP.



MARK SEES THE
PRIEST SPEAKING,
BUT DOESN'T
HEAR HIM. JUST
A HOLLOW, RUSH-
ING SOUND IN HIS
EARS, THEN A
LOW BUZZING.

HE FEELS ELECTRIC, A
HOT WIRE BURNING
BENEATH HIS STERNUM.

HE FEELS ALIVE.

JUST A LITTLE
PRESSURE
NOW...



BLAM!
BLAM!!

THE BUZZING SOUND GIVES WAY TO DISTANT THUNDER AND THE FALLING ECHOES OF SCREAMS ALL AROUND HIM.

AND THEN THE SCREAMS GIVE WAY TO LAUGHTER.

A THICK, GLUTTONOUS LAUGHTER ONLY MARK CAN HEAR.





MANHATTAN.

SPAWN
SLUMBERS.

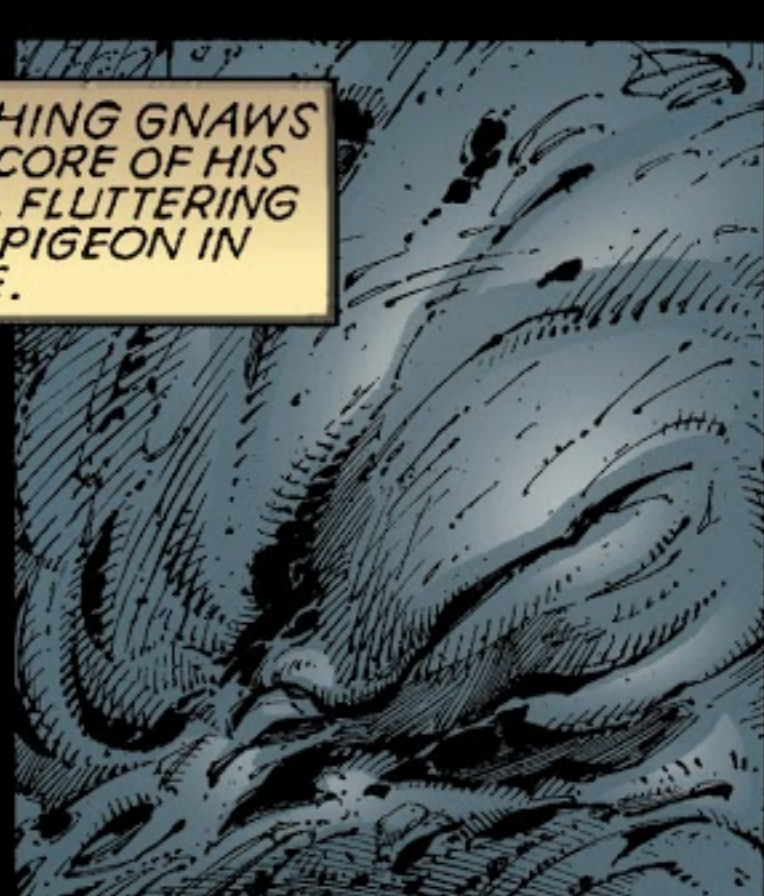


A BRIEF
RESPITE
FROM THE
TORTURES
OF HIS
EXISTENCE.



SOMETIMES, WHEN HE
DREAMS, HE ALMOST
FEELS LIKE A MAN AGAIN.

BUT RIGHT NOW,
HIS DREAMS ARE
TROUBLED.



SOMETHING GNAWS
AT THE CORE OF HIS
BEING... FLUTTERING
LIKE A PIGEON IN
A CAGE.



A PRESENCE... AN UN-
NAMED EVIL... DISTANT
YET FAMILIAR... CALLS OUT
TO HIM... TAUNTING HIM...



BLOODSTAINED WASHES AND
ECHOES OF MURDER...

MURDER
MOST FOUL...

SHAKEN BY THESE IMAGES,
SPAWN MOVES ON INSTINCT...

INSTINCT HONED
BY A LIFETIME
OF COMBAT AND
TEMPERED IN THE
FIRES OF HELL.

BOUNDING
UP DECREPIT
STAIRWAYS...
BARRELING
THROUGH
DECAYING
FLOOR
BOARDS...

FROM THE SHADOWS,
HE STARES OUT
ACROSS THE SKY-
LINE, AND SEES
NOTHING. BUT IT'S
OUT THERE...
SOMETHING IS
OUT THERE...

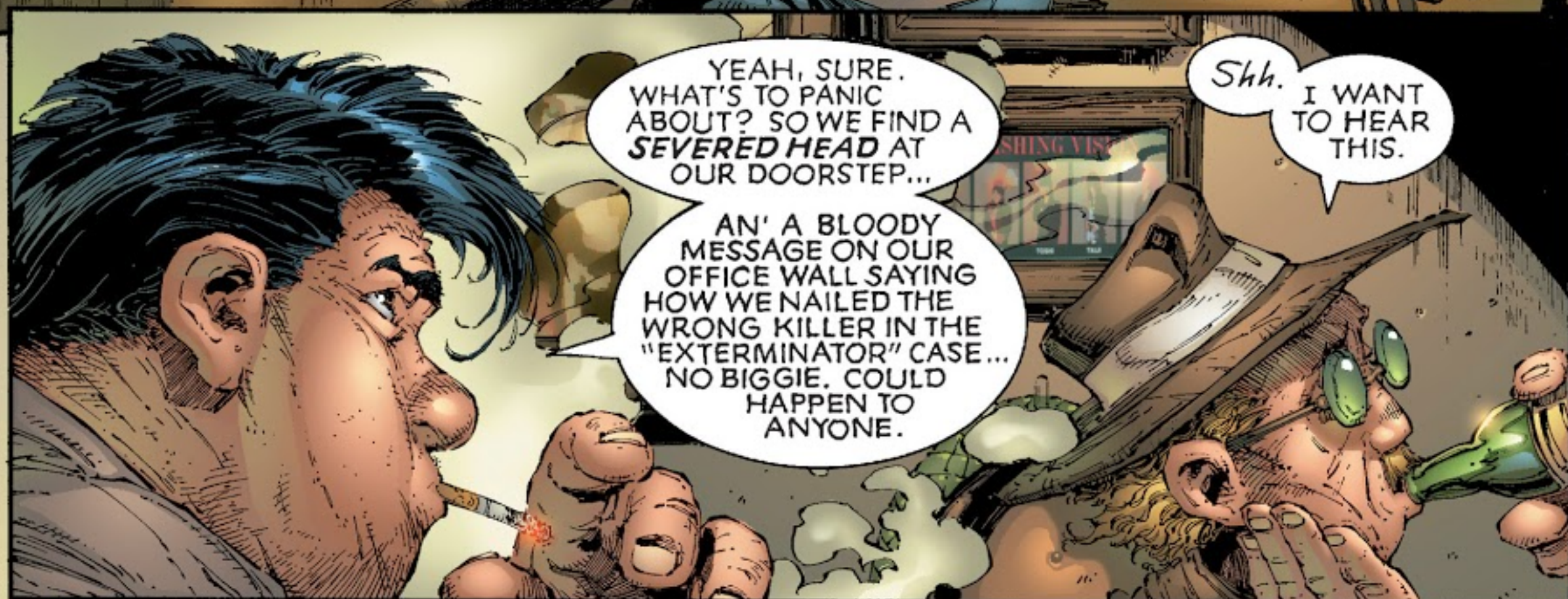
WHERE
IS IT?

AND IT'S
LAUGHING
AT HIM.



WE'RE
SCREWED,
PAL.

LET'S
NOT
PANIC
JUST
YET,
SIR.



YEAH, SURE.
WHAT'S TO PANIC
ABOUT? SO WE FIND A
SEVERED HEAD AT
OUR DOORSTEP...

AN' A BLOODY
MESSAGE ON OUR
OFFICE WALL SAYING
HOW WE NAILED THE
WRONG KILLER IN THE
"EXTERMINATOR" CASE...
NO BIGGIE. COULD
HAPPEN TO
ANYONE.

Shh. I WANT
TO HEAR
THIS.



...BRUTAL, SENSE-
LESS SLAYINGS AT A
LONG ISLAND CHURCH
THIS MORNING.
AUTHORITIES REPORT
THE YOUTH IS STILL
AT LARGE...

AND THE
HITS KEEP ON
COMING.

MAN, JUST
WHEN THINGS WERE
LOOKING UP, TOO. I
WANNA KNOW WHO DID
THIS AND I WANNA
KNOW WHY. "I'M
BACK, SIGNED
BILLY..." WHAT'S
THAT ABOUT?

LET'S JUST
COME OUT
AND SAY IT,
SIR. I THINK
WE **BOTH**
KNOW WHO
BILLY IS.



"WHO? BILLY KINCAID? EVERYONE'S FAVORITE CHILD-MOLESTING SERIAL KILLER? TORTURED THEM KIDS THEN GOT LET OUT ON A TECHNICALITY?"

"THERE'S JUST ONE LITTLE SNAG IN THAT THEORY, TWITCH. KINCAID IS **DEAD**."

"SEE, I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT'VE REMEMBERED THAT, CONSIDERING HOW IT WAS **OUR** OFFICE HE WAS FOUND IN. " *

"THERE'S NO NEED TO BE FLIPPANT, SIR. "



"AS I RECALL, **SPAWN** LEFT HIM DANGLING THERE LIKE A PRIZE MARLIN, AN ICE CREAM SCOOPER STICKIN' OUTTA HIS PANCREAS."

"I ALSO RECALL LOSING OUR **BADGES** ABOUT TWO MINUTES LATER. ANY OF THIS RING A BELL?"

"OF COURSE I REMEMBER. BUT IF SIMMONS CAN RETURN FROM THE DEAD, WHY NOT KINCAID?"

"TWITCH, I THINK THAT BULLET IN YOUR HEAD IS TURNING YOUR BRAIN SEPTIC. "

BOYS SCREAMED
GIRLS SCREAMED
SO I MADE HIM
SCREAM AND
SCREAM AND SCREAM

"TELL ME HONESTLY THAT THE SAME THOUGHT DIDN'T OCCUR TO YOU, SIR. "

*WAY BACK IN SPAWN #5.



YEAH, OKAY, IT CROSSED MY MIND. BUT THIS ALL IS GETTING TOO WEIRD.

Sigh
ALL'S I KNOW IS THE PRESS IS GONNA HAVE OUR ASSES ON A PLATE WHEN THIS GETS OUT. HEROES TO ZEROES IN RECORD TIME, MY FRIEND.



I DON'T KNOW, SIR. WE WERE A ONE-DAY STORY. I'M SURE EVERYONE'S FORGOTTEN OUR NAMES BY NOW.

YEAH? YOU REALLY THINK SO?

'SCUSE ME, GUYS. I DIDN'T REALIZE WE HAD **CELEBRITIES** IN OUR MIDST.

THOSE GENTLEMEN AT THE BAR WANTED TO BUY A ROUND FOR THE GUYS WHO CAUGHT THE "EXTERMINATOR." ENJOY.



THANKS, FELLAS.

YEAH. CHEERS.



WE ARE **SO** SCREWED.

Oh YEAH.

LONG
ISLAND.

MARK LUCAS
HIDES IN DARK-
NESS, EYES SHUT
DRUM-TIGHT,
PRAYING TO THE
VERY DEPTHS OF
HIS SOUL THAT IT
WAS ALL JUST A
BAD DREAM.

HE BARGAINS AND
PLEADS AND SWEARS
TO DEVOTE HIS LIFE
TO GOOD DEEDS, IF
ONLY IT WOULD ALL
JUST GO AWAY.

IT
DOESN'T
WORK.

Psst...
HEY, MARK,
IT'S ME. I
BROUGHT
YOU A SAND-
WICH.

HE TRIES NOT
TO THINK
ABOUT HIS
MOM AND
DAD, ABOUT
FATHER
COLLINS, OR
ABOUT ANY
OF THE REST.

THANKS,
MAN, BUT I
DON'T THINK
I CAN
EAT...

YOU'RE
ALL OVER THE
TV, DUDE. THIS
IS REALLY HARD-
CORE. THE COPS
CAME BY. I TOLD
'EM I HADN'T
SEEN YOU.

I THINK
I'M LOSING
MY MIND.
WHEN I
CLOSE MY
EYES...
I DON'T
KNOW...

HE TRIES NOT
TO THINK OF ANY-
THING AT ALL.

WOW. UM,
LISTEN. IT'S
DARK OUT NOW.
MAYBE YOU
SHOULD, WELL,
YOU KNOW...

YEAH.
OKAY.

MANHATTAN.

Mmm...
A RATHER
PEPPERY
SAUVIGNON.

PIQUANT
YET
BUOYANT.
GOOD FINISH.
PAINTS THE
THROAT
NICELY.

NOT
ENTIRELY
UNLIKE
FRESHLY
SPILT
BLOOD.

OK,
ETHAN,
YOU'RE
AWFUL.

I HAVE A
REPUTATION
TO MAINTAIN.

OH,
SPEAKING OF
"AWFUL," DID YOU
HEAR ABOUT THAT
SHOOTING OUT ON
LONG ISLAND? I
HAVE A COUSIN
WHO LIVES
RIGHT NEAR
THERE. KIDS
TODAY.

OH YES... ANOTHER TEEN-
AGE SUBURBAN MALCONTENT
GOES GUN CRAZY. WHY CAN'T THEY
JUST GET BAD HAIRCUTS AND
READ NEITCHZE?

THE WORST
PART IS THAT IT'S ALL
GETTING SO **PREDICT-
ABLE**. I EXPECT THE
BOY SCOUTS WILL START
GIVING OUT MERIT
BADGES IN **SPREE
KILLING** SOON.

tsk-tsk.
AWFUL.
YOU'RE JUST
AWFUL.



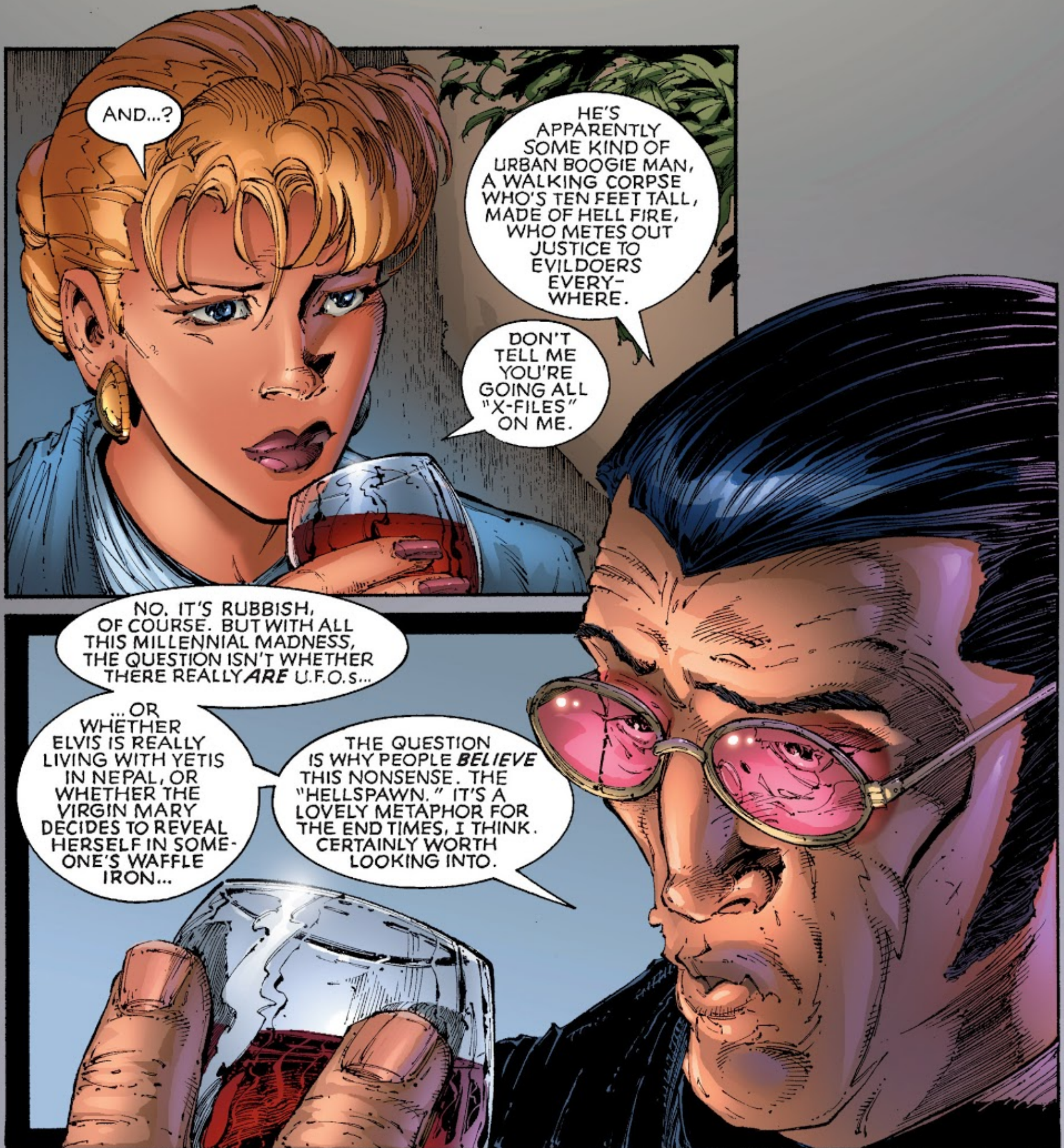
NOW, ALLOW ME TO BE YOUR **AGENT** FOR A MOMENT, DARLING. HOW'S THE BOOK GOING? THIS IS A CRUCIAL TIME, FOR YOU. I SEE BIG THINGS.

Hmm. THE BOOK IS TURNING SOME UNEXPECTED CORNERS. I'VE UNCOVERED SOME RATHER INTERESTING NEW URBAN PHENOMENA.

LET ME ASK YOU, HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF **SPAWN**?

WHAT, YOU MEAN LIKE **SALMON**?

NO. AS IN **HELL SPAWN**. OR HELL'S PAWN, I SUPPOSE. I CAME ACROSS IT WHILE RESEARCHING THE HOMELESS MURDERS.



AND...?

HE'S APPARENTLY SOME KIND OF URBAN BOOGIE MAN, A WALKING CORPSE WHO'S TEN FEET TALL, MADE OF HELL FIRE, WHO METES OUT JUSTICE TO EVILDOERS EVERYWHERE.

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE GOING ALL "X-FILES" ON ME.

NO. IT'S RUBBISH, OF COURSE. BUT WITH ALL THIS MILLENNIAL MADNESS, THE QUESTION ISN'T WHETHER THERE REALLY **ARE** U.F.O.S...

...OR WHETHER ELVIS IS REALLY LIVING WITH YETIS IN NEPAL, OR WHETHER THE VIRGIN MARY DECIDES TO REVEAL HERSELF IN SOMEONE'S WAFFLE IRON...

THE QUESTION IS WHY PEOPLE **BELIEVE** THIS NONSENSE. THE "HELLSPAWN." IT'S A LOVELY METAPHOR FOR THE END TIMES, I THINK. CERTAINLY WORTH LOOKING INTO.

ELSEWHERE.

IT'S IN
MY HEAD
AGAIN, COG.
IT'S PLAYING
WITH ME.

I
THOUGHT
THIS WAS
OVER,
BUT IT'S
BACK.

I
KNOW.

YOU
KNOW?

YES, I'M
AFRAID I
FOUND SOME-
THING RATHER
DISTURBING.
REMEMBER THE
BRAND THAT WAS
FOUND ON MS. FROST
AFTER HER DEATH,
AND ON THE
MAN IN THE
MORGUE?*

I WAS FINALLY
ABLE TO FULLY IDENTIFY
IT. THE **SERPENTINE
ADDENDUM** IS WRITTEN
IN AN ANCIENT CODE, SO
IT TOOK A WHILE. COME,
I'LL SHOW YOU.



"DIABOLIS INTERIUM." TRANSLATES ROUGHLY TO THE "DEMON WITHIN" OR THE "DEVIL INSIDE."

IT DESCRIBES AN *EVIL SPIRIT* SENT FROM HELL, WHICH TEMPORARILY POSSESSES A HUMAN SOUL. IT THEN GOADS THE HOST TO ACT ON HIS OR HER DARKEST IMPULSE.

SO WHILE SARAH FROST *DID* KILL ALL THOSE PEOPLE, IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE SHE WAS ENCOURAGED BY THIS EVIL PRESENCE.

NOW, THIS IS THE PARTICULARLY INFERNAL PART.

THE SOUL OF THE KILLER IS THEN CONDEMNED FOR THE CRIMES IT WAS TRICKED INTO COMMITTING, AND DAMNED TO ETERNAL HELL.

WITH EACH NEW SOUL HARVESTED, THE SPIRIT BECOMES MORE POWERFUL AND MORE DEADLY.

HOW DO WE STOP IT?

I HAVEN'T THE FAINTEST IDEA.



TEN HOURS AGO, MARK LUCAS HAD A FUTURE. A BRIGHT AND SHINING PATH OF POSSIBILITIES STRETCHED OUT ENDLESSLY IN FRONT OF HIM.

HE WAS GOING TO BE SOMEONE. A DOCTOR, MAYBE. OR AN ARCHEOLOGIST. HE WAS GOING TO TRAVEL TO EUROPE AND FALL IN LOVE AND GET MARRIED.



HE WOULD HAVE CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN. VACATIONS AT THE LAKE AND CHRISTMAS EVES 'ROUND THE FIRE.

BUT THAT'S ALL GONE NOW. STOLEN AWAY LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT.

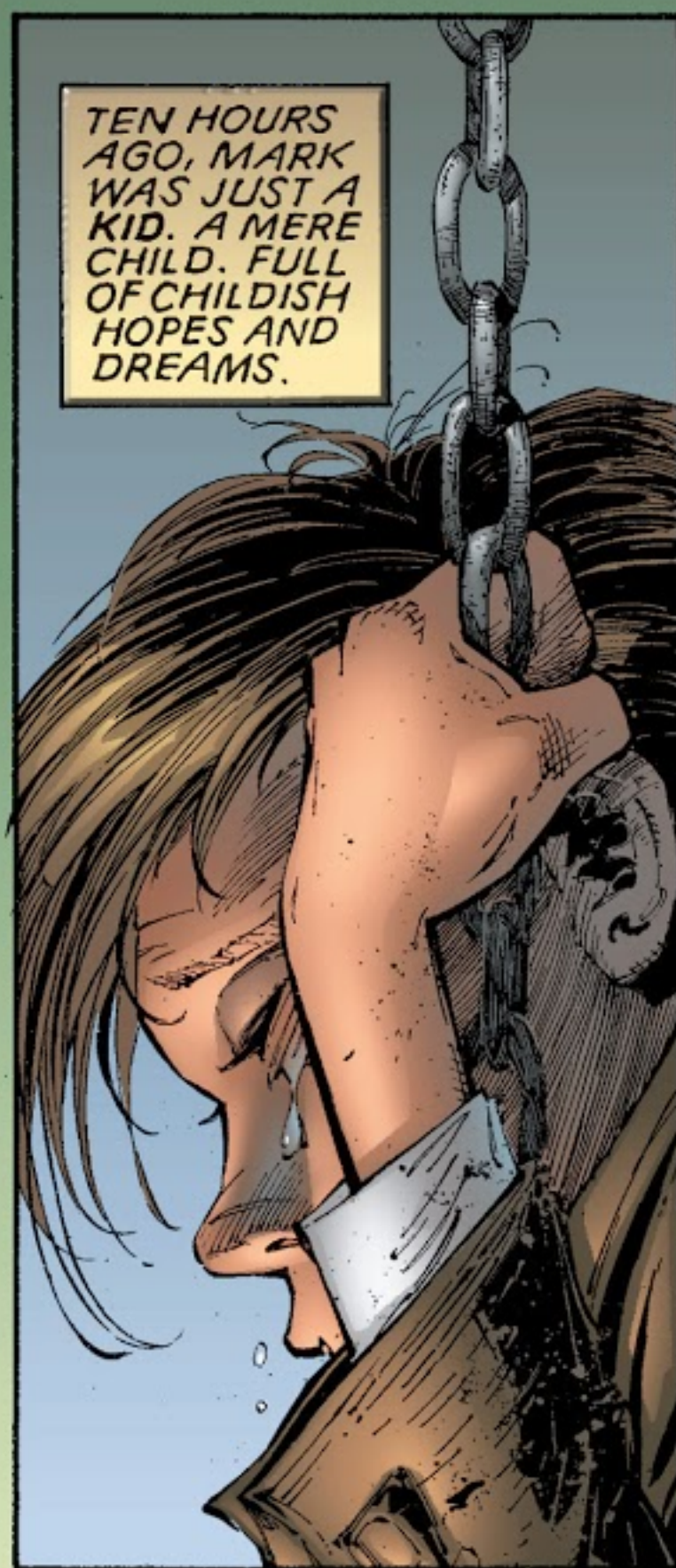
BLASTED INTO OBLIVION BY SIX PULLS OF A COLD METAL TRIGGER.



HE SEES THAT NOW.



THE GUN FEELS HEAVY AND FOREIGN IN HIS HANDS, SOME MONSTROUS, ALIEN APPENDAGE. SO THIS IS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HOLD DEATH IN YOUR HANDS.

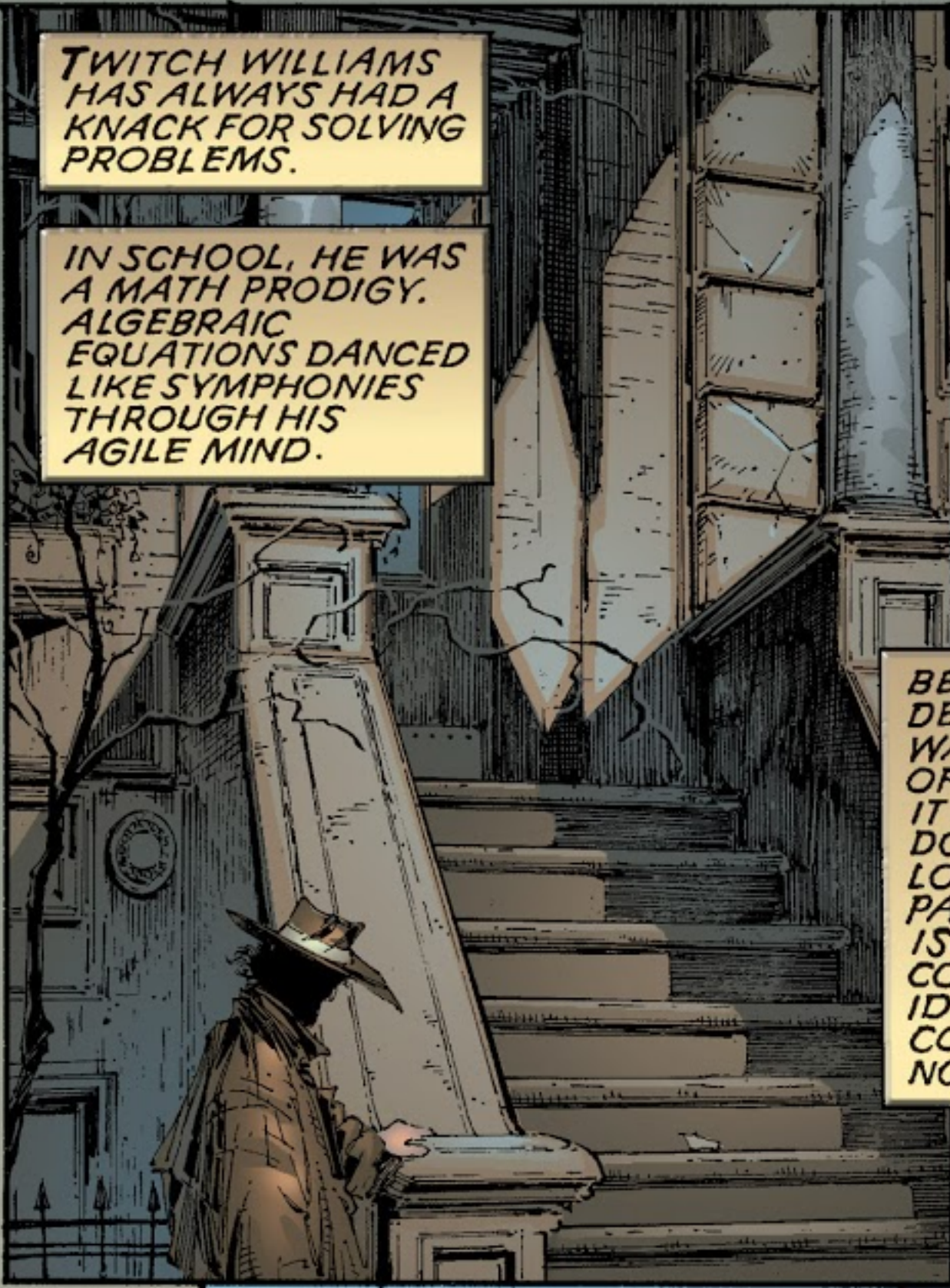


TEN HOURS AGO, MARK WAS JUST A KID. A MERE CHILD. FULL OF CHILDISH HOPES AND DREAMS.

BUT CHILDHOOD'S OVER.

NOW... NOW AND FOREVER... HE IS A KILLER.





TWITCH WILLIAMS HAS ALWAYS HAD A KNACK FOR SOLVING PROBLEMS.

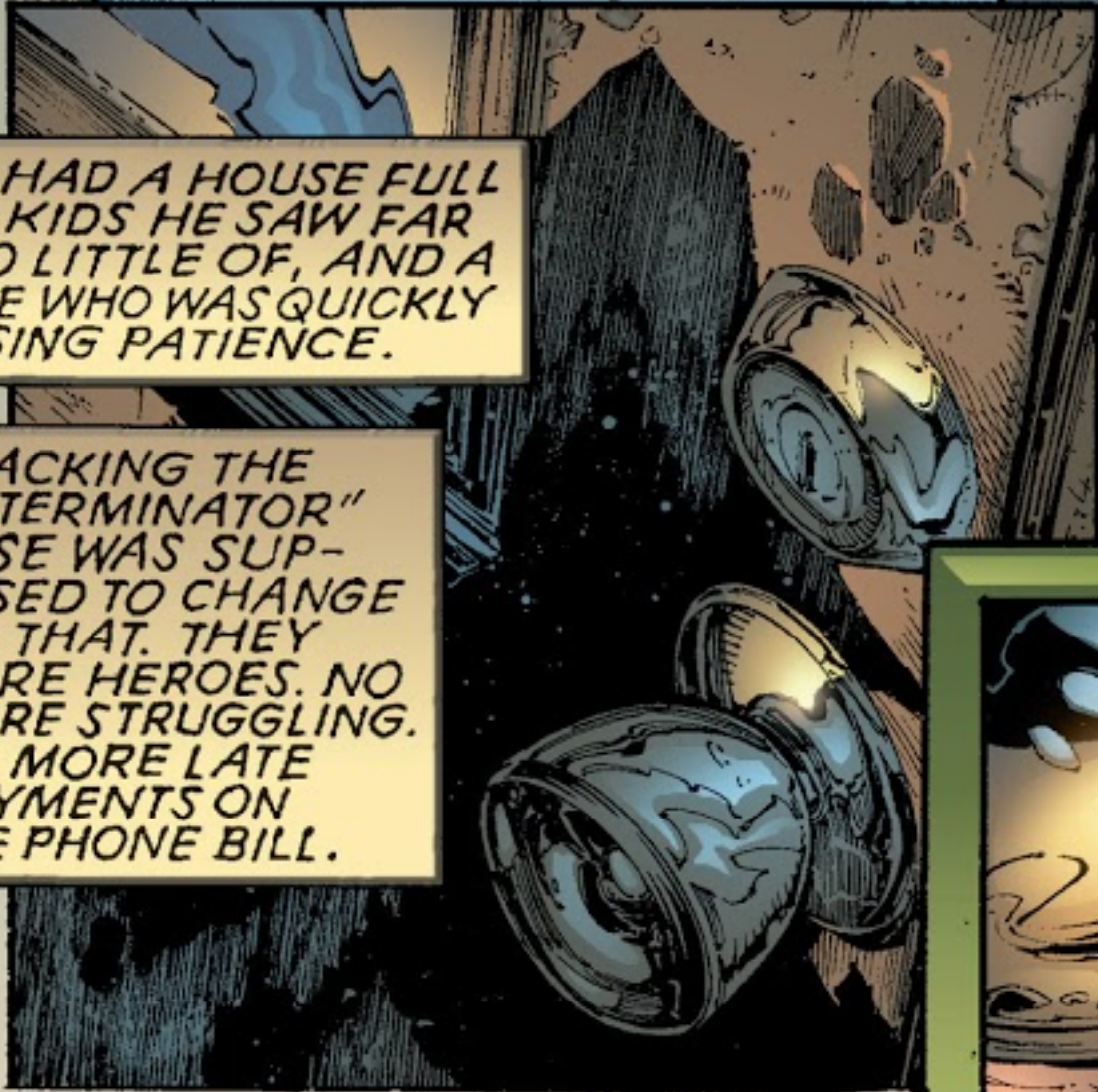
IN SCHOOL, HE WAS A MATH PRODIGY. ALGEBRAIC EQUATIONS DANCED LIKE SYMPHONIES THROUGH HIS AGILE MIND.

BUT THERE ARE FAR MORE UNSEEN VARIABLES IN REAL LIFE. "X" THE UNKNOWN.

WHEN HE GOT FIRED FROM THE POLICE FORCE, HE AND SAM WENT INTO BUSINESS FOR THEMSELVES. TWITCH'S WIFE, HELEN, NEVER LIKED THE IDEA.

BECOMING A DETECTIVE WASN'T MUCH OF A STRETCH. IT ALL COMES DOWN TO LOOKING FOR PATTERNS. ISOLATING CO-FACTORS. IDENTIFYING COMMON DENOMINATORS.

TOO SORDID, TOO RISKY, AND FOR FAR TOO LITTLE MONEY. GETTING SHOT IN THE HEAD DIDN'T HELP MATTERS.



HE HAD A HOUSE FULL OF KIDS HE SAW FAR TOO LITTLE OF, AND A WIFE WHO WAS QUICKLY LOSING PATIENCE.

CRACKING THE "EXTERMINATOR" CASE WAS SUPPOSED TO CHANGE ALL THAT. THEY WERE HEROES. NO MORE STRUGGLING. NO MORE LATE PAYMENTS ON THE PHONE BILL.

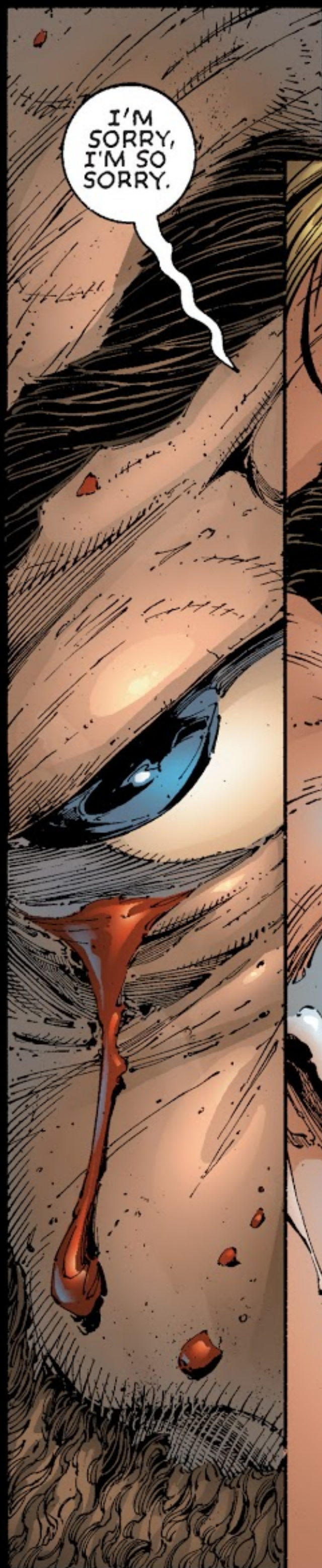


HELEN WAS SO PROUD OF HIM. SO HOW CAN HE TELL HER THEY WERE WRONG? THAT THEY CAUGHT THE WRONG SUSPECT?

THE MAN WHO HAS THE COURAGE TO WALK INTO A THOUSAND BLIND ALLEYS, TO STAND BRAVE IN THE FACE OF GUNFIRE, CAN'T BRING HIMSELF TO OPEN THE DOOR AND WALK INSIDE.

HE SIMPLY CAN'T LOOK HER IN THE EYE AND TELL HER HE'S FAILED.





I'M
SORRY,
I'M SO
SORRY.



I DON'T
KNOW HOW THIS
HAPPENED...



I JUST
DON'T KNOW
WHAT WENT
WRONG...



BUT I
DIDN'T MEAN
IT... I DIDN'T
MEAN TO *HURT*
ANYONE. IT WASN'T
ME. I MEAN... IT
WAS ME... BUT
NOT THE
REAL ME.

I WISH
I COULD
TAKE IT ALL
BACK. I SWEAR
I WOULD DO
ANYTHING... BUT
IT'S TOO LATE
NOW. I DON'T
KNOW... I
KNOW...





...IN FRONT OF
HOLY REDEEMER
CHURCH IN MERRICK,
LONG ISLAND, WHERE
JUST HOURS AGO,
YOUNG MARK LUCAS
APPARENTLY TOOK
HIS OWN LIFE.

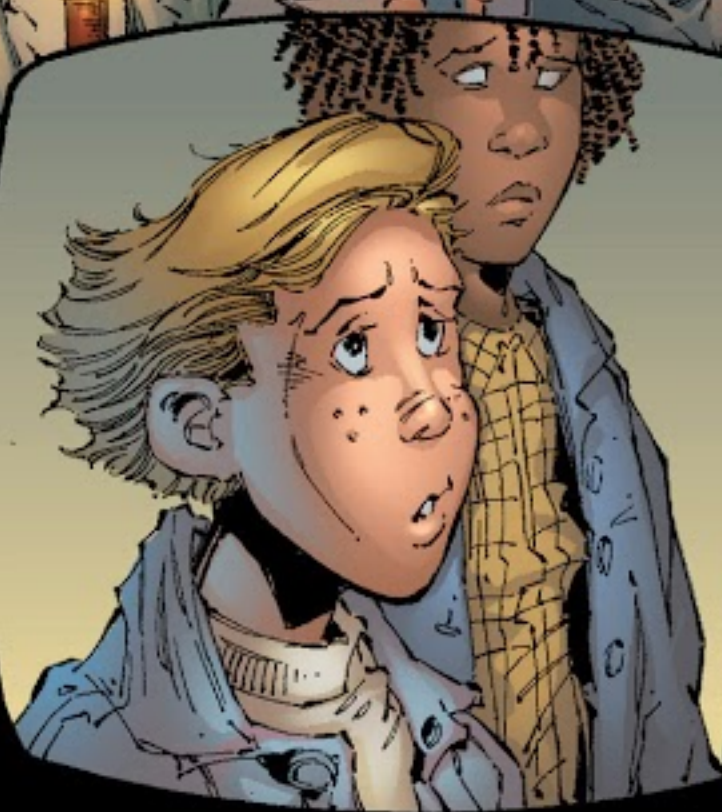
THIS IS
THE VERY SAME
CHURCH WHERE
LUCAS ALLEGEDLY
OPENED FIRE ON
THE SUNDAY
CONGREGATION
WITH HIS FATHER'S
.38 CALIBER
REVOLVER.

THREE PEOPLE
WERE KILLED, INCLU-
DING FATHER PATRICK
COLLINS, WHO HAD BEEN
CONDUCTING MASS
WHEN THE SHOOTING
BROKE OUT.

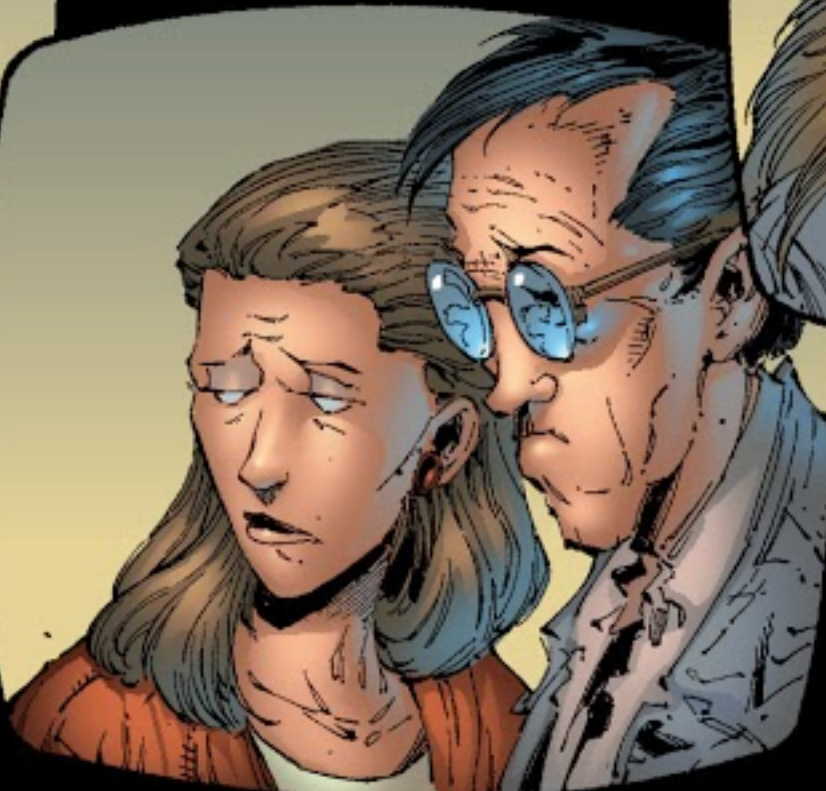
FOUR OTHERS
WERE INJURED,
TWO CRITICALLY.
LUCAS HAD BEEN
ELUDING POLICE
SINCE THIS
MORNING.

"THE COMMUNITY HAS GATHERED IN AN
IMPROMPTU CANDLELIGHT VIGIL, A
MEMORIAL BOTH FOR LUCAS AND FOR
THE VICTIMS OF THE SHOOTING.

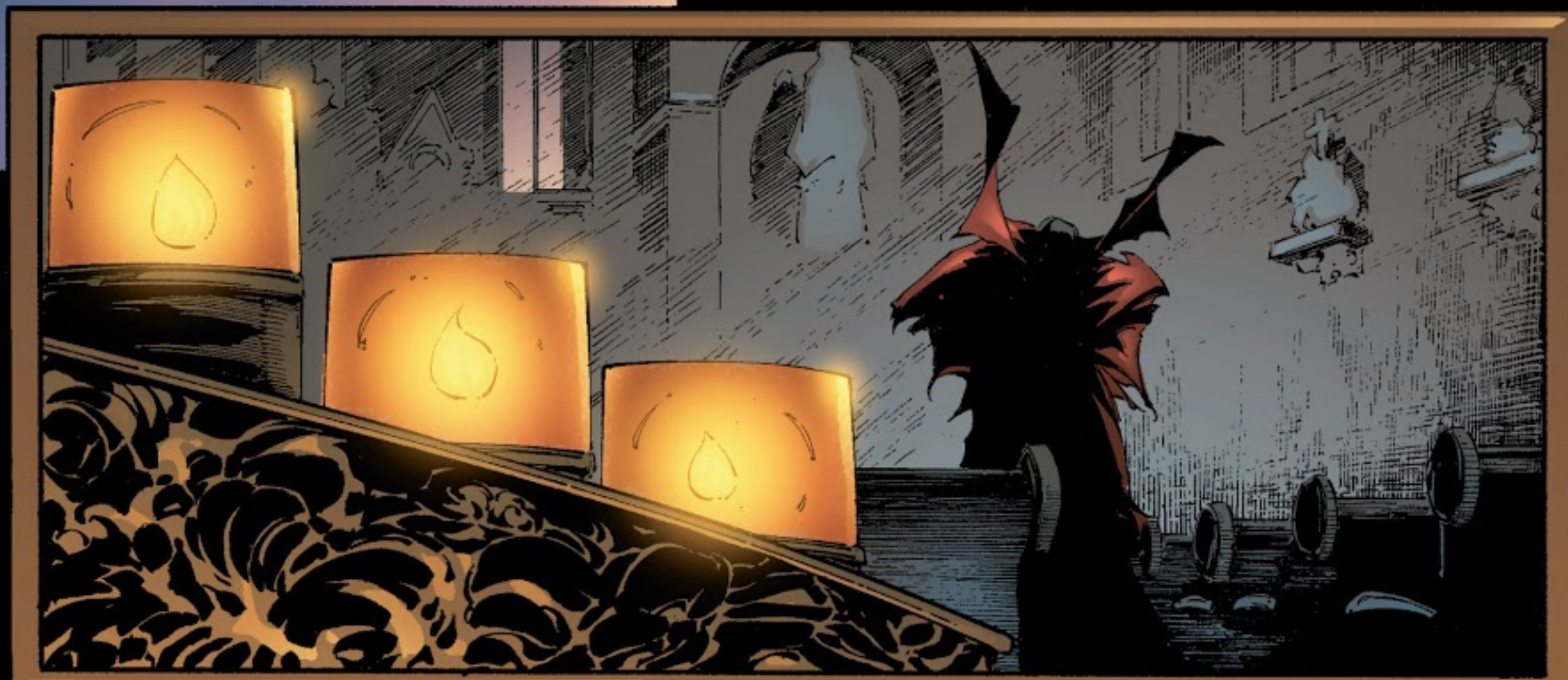
"FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS
TRYING TO EASE ONE ANOTHER'S
GRIEF AND, PERHAPS, FIND A
WAY TO MAKE SENSE OF THESE
TRAGIC, HORRIFIC EVENTS.



"LUCAS WAS DESCRIBED
BY ALL AS A BRIGHT,
GOOD-HEARTED KID--AN
HONOR STUDENT AND
CHURCH VOLUNTEER.



"POLICE HAVE NOT YET
DETERMINED ANY MOTIVE
BEHIND TODAY'S BLOOD-
SHED, AND NOW IT
APPEARS WE MAY NEVER
KNOW..."



I'M STARTING UP A
Collection...



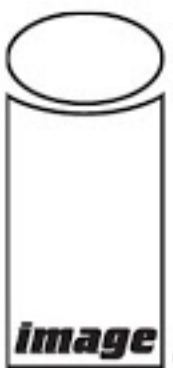
TO BE
CONTINUED!

SPAWN



Capullo
99

MFARIANE



82

DIGITAL
EDITION



KINKAID!

HEARD
YOU
MISSED
ME...

I'M
BACK!



KINCAID,
YOU SONUVABITCH!
YOU'RE BEHIND
THIS? I'LL RIP
YOUR--

AWW... THAT'S NOT
A *HAPPY FACE*! NO
BALLOONS? NO *ICE*
CREAM? AREN'T YOU
GLAD TO SEE ME,
SPAWN?

UH-UH-UH...
PLAY NICE,
SPAWN.

SHLANG

KLANK

UHG!
DAMMIT,
KINCAID!
WHAT'S
YOUR
GAME?

HAVEN'T
YOU FIGURED IT
OUT? I MADE ME
A *DEAL*, TOO!
HARVESTING
SOULS FOR THE
BIG "M." SIX
MORE AND I
GET A *PUP*
TENT!
HA HA!

MALEBOLGIA
SENDS HIS LOVE
BY THE WAY...

WHAT'S THE
MATTER? YOU LOOK
A LITTLE SICK THERE,
PAL. GOTTA
HEADACHE?

I'LL BE HONEST.
I WAS KINDA *SORE*
ABOUT YOU *KILLING*
ME AND ALL. I MEAN,
THAT *ICE CREAM*
SCOOPER REALLY
HURT... *

* SPAWN #5.

THUD!



...BUT IT
TURNS OUT
TO BE THE BEST
THING THAT EVER
HAPPENED TO ME.
I GUESS THIS
IS WHAT THEY
CALL "IRONY,"
huh?

IT'S A LOT
EASIER THAN I
THOUGHT. ONLY
TAKES A LITTLE
PUSH TO TURN
MOST PEOPLE
INTO KILLERS...

GOD DAMN,
IT'S SO SWEET
WHEN THEY
SUFFER... I
SCREAM, THEY
SCREAM...
Hee-Hee-
Hee!

BUT YOU
KNOW THAT,
DON'T YOU? OK,
YEAH... THAT'S
RIGHT, BUDDY. I'M
THE ONE WHO'S
BEEN INSIDE
YOUR HEAD.

I KNOW
EVERYTHING,
SIMMONS. AND
I'M GONNA MAKE
SURE I HURT YOU
WHERE YOU LIVE.
BUT NOT
YET...



"I'LL LEAVE YOU
A COUPLE THINGS
TO THINK ABOUT..."

"WE'RE JUST
GETTING STARTED.
THINGS ARE GOING
TO GET REAL BAD,
REAL FAST."

"A LOT OF
PEOPLE
ARE GOING
TO DIE..."



"AND IT'S GOING TO BE
ALL YOUR FAULT!"



"HUGS AND
KISSES,
SPAWNY."



"SEE YOU
IN YOUR
DREAMS."



HOLD
IT RIGHT
THERE,
PSYCHO!



MOVE A
MUSCLE
AND YOU'RE
A DEAD
MAN!



Whoosh

WHAT
THE HELL?
LIGHTS
WENT
OUT!



FREAK'S
GONE.

LOOK
AROUND!
FIND
HIM!





>Ahem<
FORGIVE ME,
MR. SIMMONS...
er... **SPAWN**... I
NEED TO SPEAK
TO YOU,
PLEASE...

TWITCH?
WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE?

I DON'T
LIKE
PEOPLE
SNEAKING UP
ON ME. HOW
DID YOU
KNOW
WHERE
TO FIND
ME?

I DON'T
KNOW. IT'S STRANGE.
THE INFORMATION WAS
INSIDE MY HEAD SOME-
HOW. LIKE THE WAY I
KNOW MY PHONE
NUMBER, OR WHAT
COLOR "BLUE" IS.

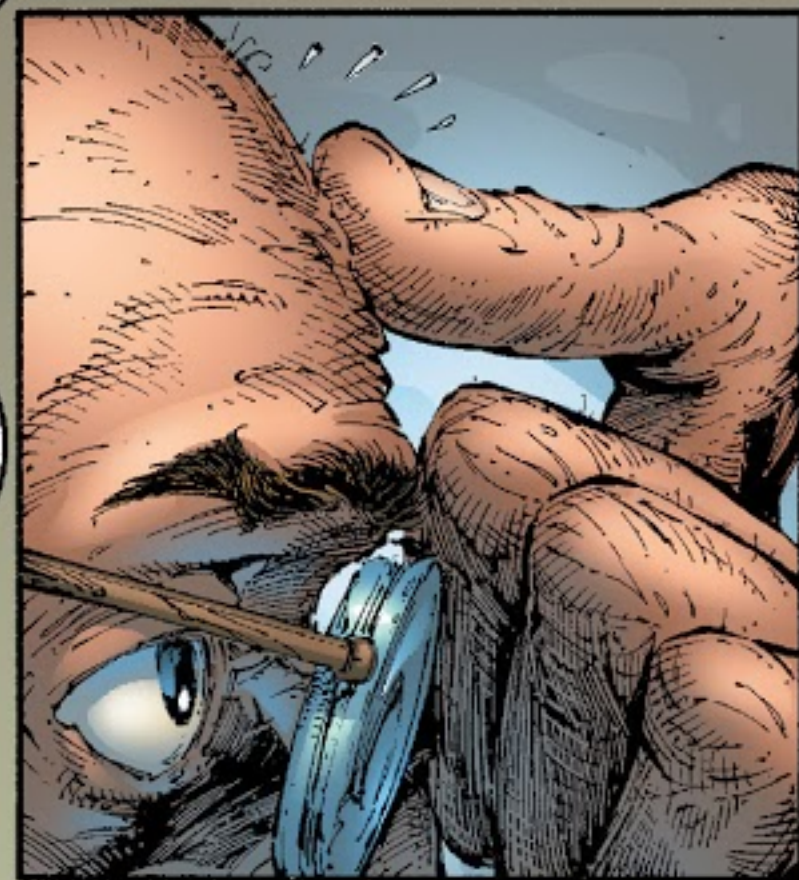
I JUST
KNEW.

YOU
EXPECT
ME TO
BELIEVE
THAT?



I DON'T
PROFESS TO HAVE A
LOGICAL EXPLANATION.
BUT LATELY I SEEM TO
KNOW A LOT OF THINGS I
SHOULDN'T. A KIND
OF SIXTH SENSE,
ALMOST.

IT'S BEEN
THAT WAY
EVER SINCE I
WAS **SHOT**. EVER
SINCE YOU
SAVED MY
LIFE. *



* SPAWN 78.



WHATEVER.
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
WHERE'S THAT WALKING
HEART ATTACK
YOU CALL A
PARTNER?

HE DOESN'T
KNOW I'M HERE.
IT'S ABOUT THIS
BOX... THERE'S...
WELL, THERE'S A
SEVERED HEAD
IN IT. A GIFT
FROM **BILLY**
KINCAID.**

WE DIDN'T
KNOW WHAT TO
DO WITH IT. WE
CAN'T EXACTLY
GO TO THE
POLICE...

* SPAWN 80.



FINE.
I'LL TAKE
CARE OF IT.
ANYTHING
ELSE.

I KNOW
WHAT'S
GOING ON. I
KNOW ABOUT
KINCAID... HE'S
BACK SOME-
HOW TO TAKE
REVENGE ON
ALL WHO
WRONGED
HIM...

YOUR
"SIXTH
SENSE"
TELL YOU
THAT,
TOO?

I THOUGHT
KILLING HIM
WAS THE RIGHT
THING TO DO. IT
ONLY MADE HIM
STRONGER...



YOU MADE
A JUDGMENT.
YOU DID WHAT YOU
THOUGHT WAS RIGHT
AND IT TURNED OUT
TERRIBLY WRONG. I
UNDERSTAND.

YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND
JACK.



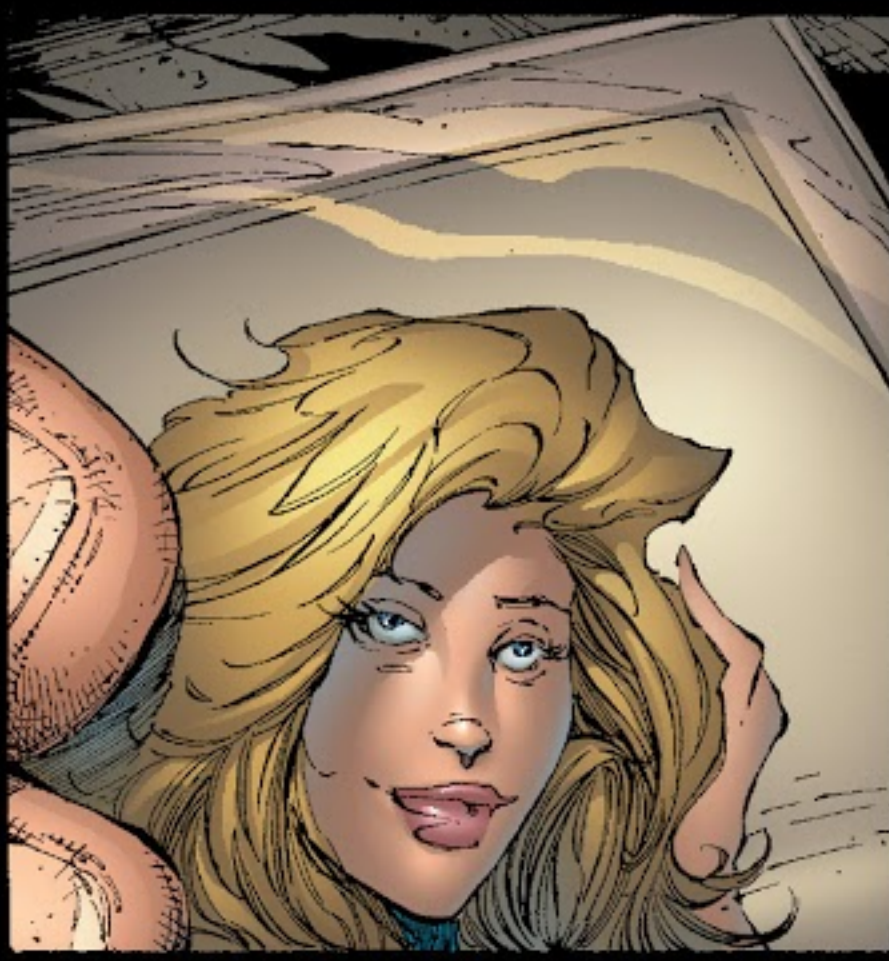
I BELIEVE
I DO. I KNOW
WHO YOU ARE...
I'VE READ YOUR
FILE. I KNOW
THE *MAN* YOU
WERE.

I KNOW YOU
BELIEVED IN THINGS
LIKE *HONOR* AND *DUTY*,
AND THEY WEREN'T
ENOUGH TO
SAVE YOU.

I KNOW ABOUT
WANDA. AND TERRY.
I KNOW YOU LOST YOUR
WIFE. I KNOW YOU
WATCHED THE PEOPLE
YOU LOVE SLIP FROM
YOUR GRASP...

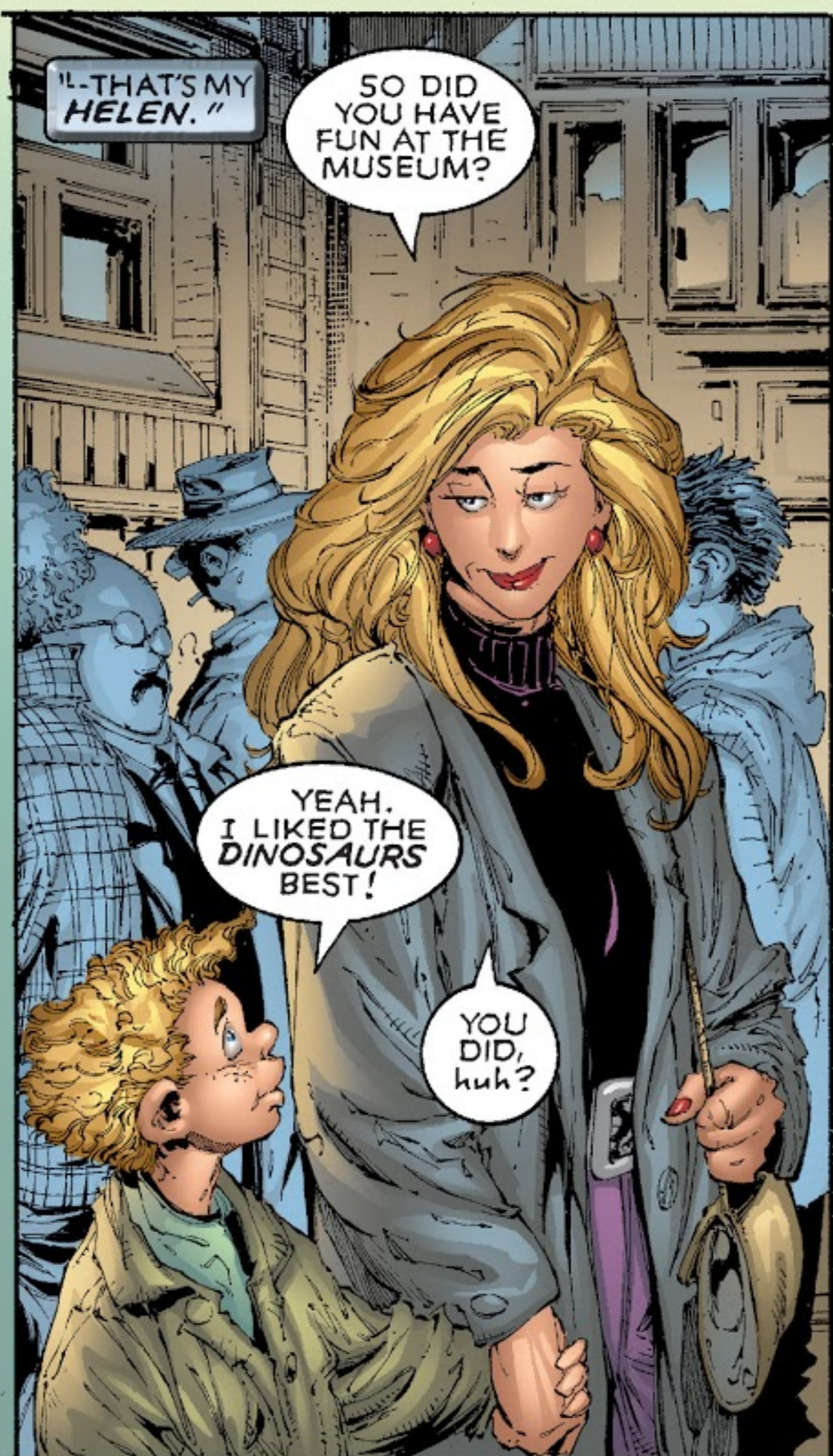


... AND I
HAVE TO
TELL YOU, I
THINK I CAN
UNDERSTAND
EXACTLY
HOW THAT
FEELS.



YOUR
WIFE?
SHE'S
PRETTY.

YEAH,
THAT'S
HER...



"-THAT'S MY HELEN."

SO DID YOU HAVE FUN AT THE MUSEUM?

YEAH. I LIKED THE DINOSAURS BEST!

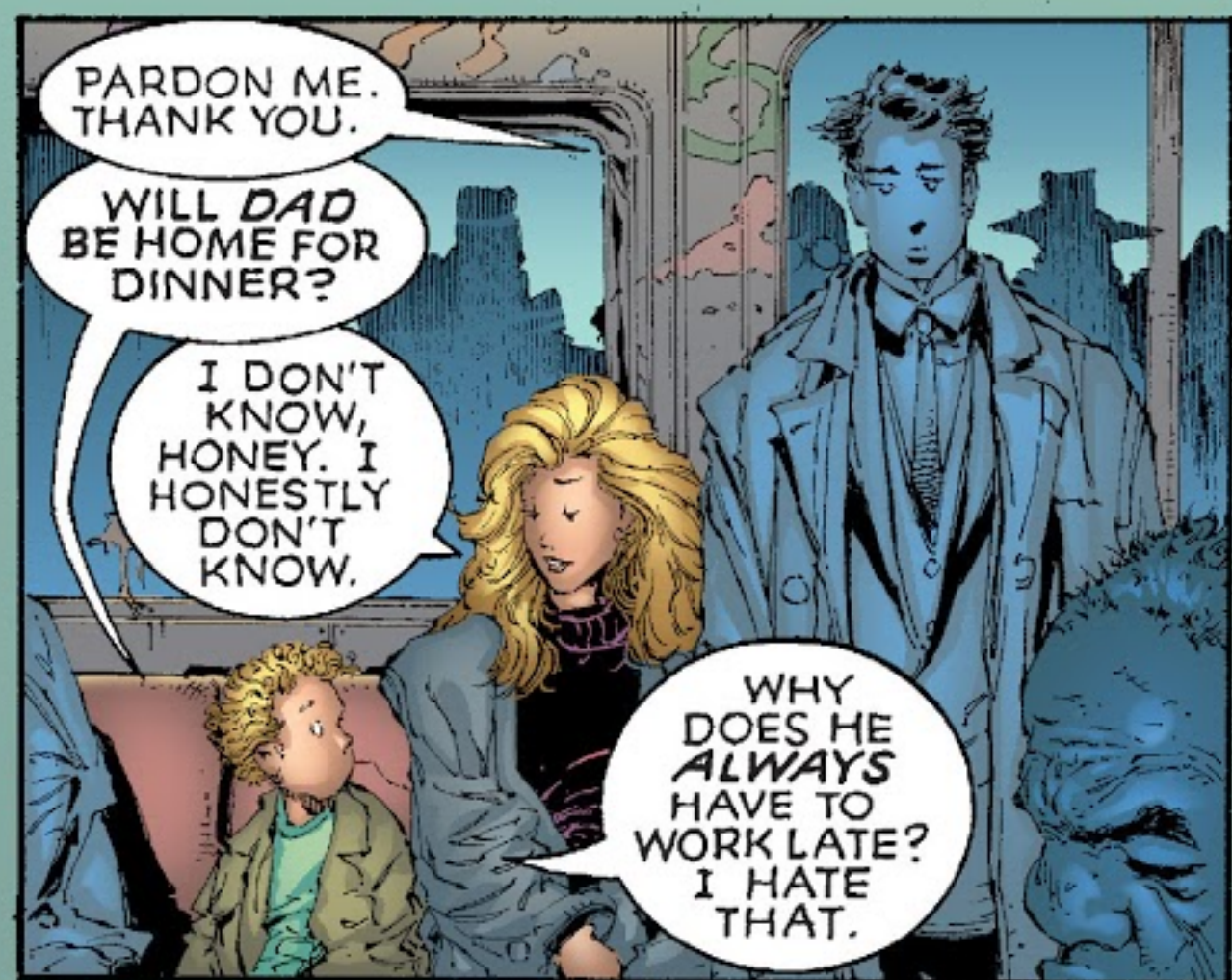
YOU DID, huh?



SO WHAT DO YOU SAY WE PICK UP SOME CHINESE ON THE WAY HOME? Hmm? HOW'S THAT SOUND?

CAN WE MAKE IT PIZZA INSTEAD?

PIZZA? I THINK THAT CAN BE ARRANGED.



PARDON ME. THANK YOU.

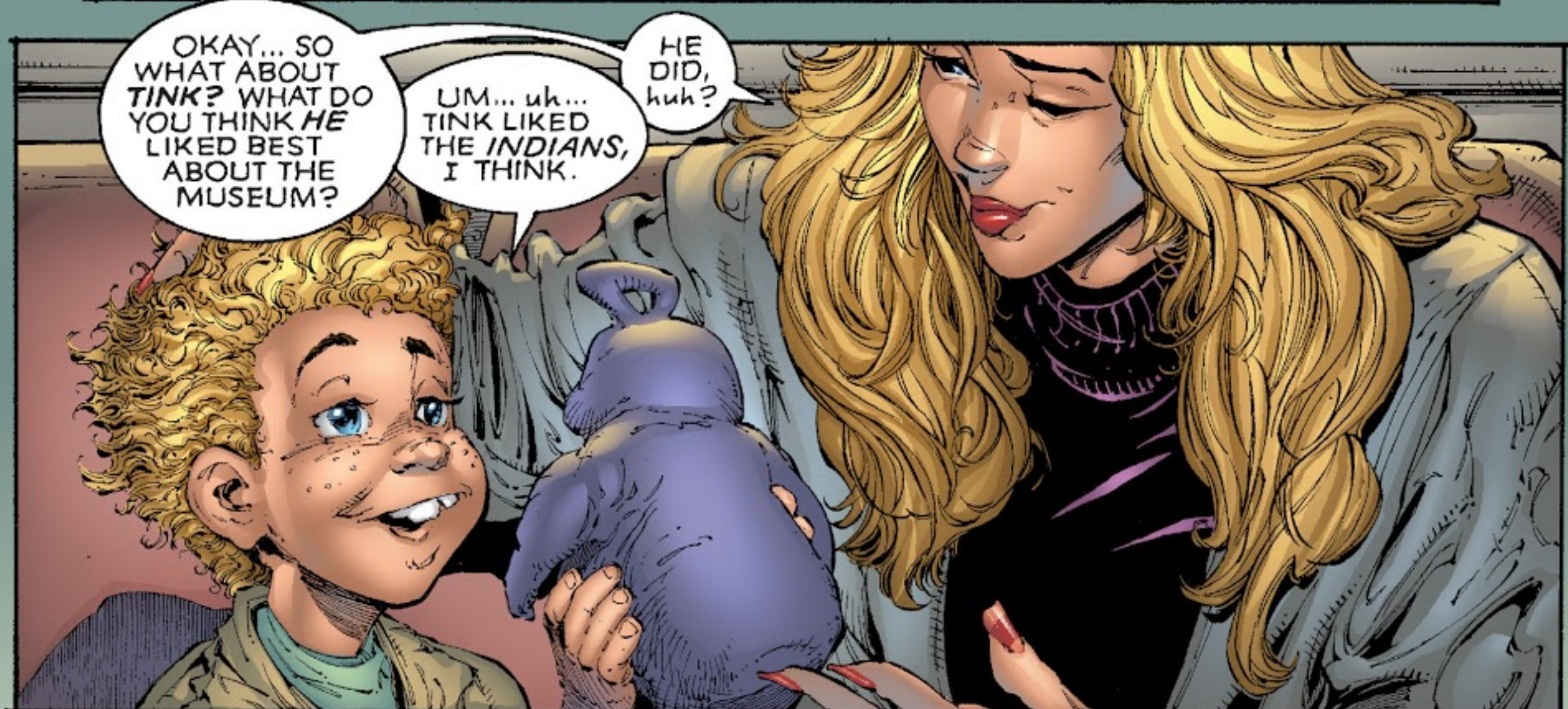
WILL DAD BE HOME FOR DINNER?

I DON'T KNOW, HONEY. I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW.

WHY DOES HE ALWAYS HAVE TO WORK LATE? I HATE THAT.



YOU AND ME BOTH, KID.



OKAY... SO WHAT ABOUT TINK? WHAT DO YOU THINK HE LIKED BEST ABOUT THE MUSEUM?

UM... uh... TINK LIKED THE INDIANS, I THINK.

HE DID, huh?



WHAT WAS THAT?

SOUNDED LIKE A GUNSHOT.

Oh, GREAT.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, MAY I PLEASE HAVE YOUR ATTENTION. WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT THIS TRAIN HAS BEEN UNAVOIDABLY DELAYED...

THE "HELLSPAWN," ULTIMATELY, IS A METAPHOR FOR THE COLLECTIVE SHADOW OF A DECLINING AGE.

THE URBAN MYTH OF A SUPERNATURAL AVENGER RISING UP FROM THE GRIME OF THE CITY; IT IS A PERFECTLY APT REFLECTION OF A FRACTURED SOCIETY.

AN IMPOSSIBLY POWERFUL BEING WHO DWELLS AMONG THE LOWEST OF THE LOW, METING OUT JUSTICE WHICH SEEMS SO ELUSIVE TO THE COMMON MAN...



HI, I'M VELVET.

YOU'RE EARLY.

SO WHERE DO YOU WANT TO--

I'M WORKING.



... WHO LURKS IN EVERY SHADOW, WHO KNOWS OUR DARKEST SECRETS...

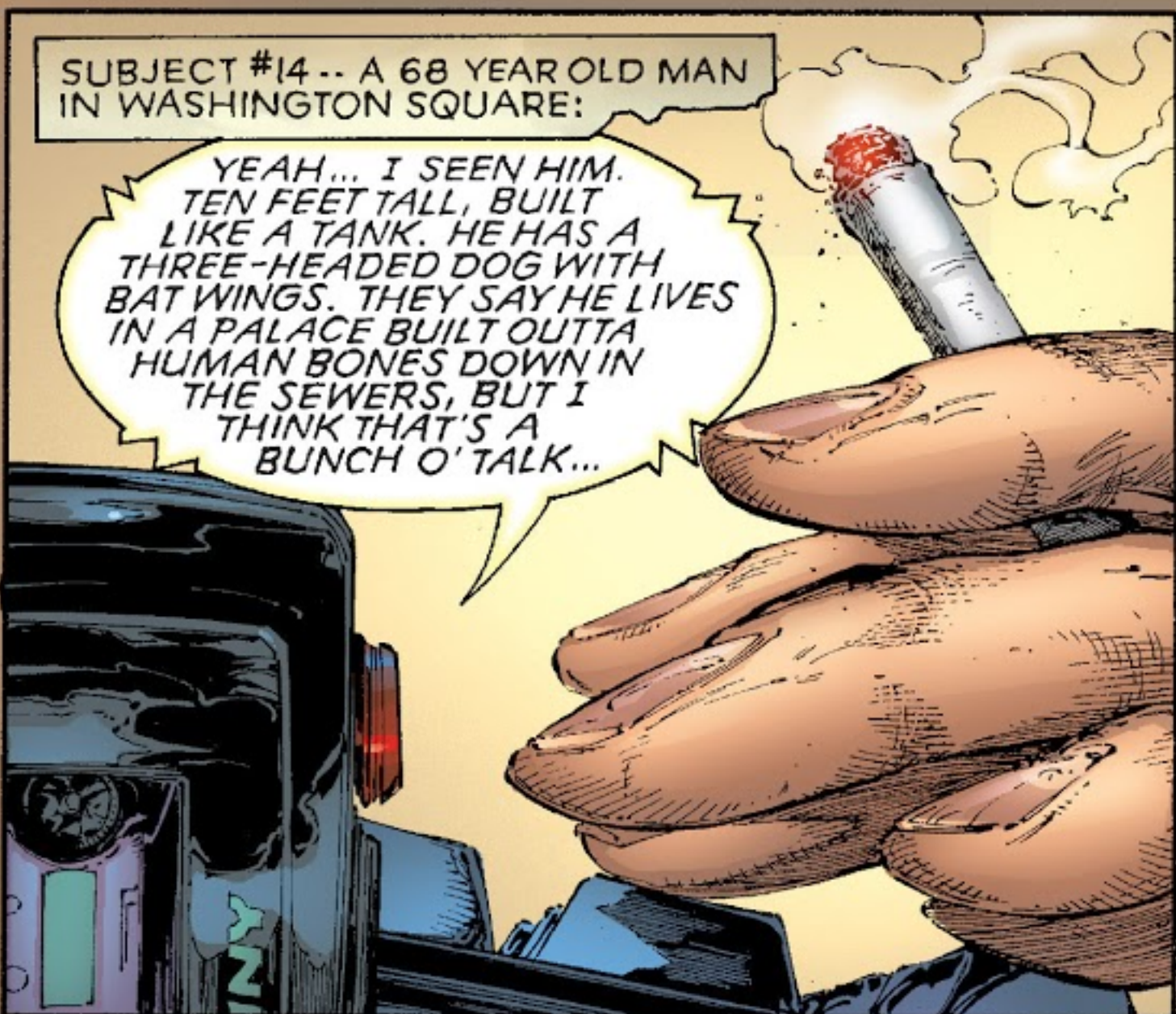
REPORTS OF THIS CRIMSON-CLOAKED BOOGIE MAN DATE BACK AT LEAST SEVERAL YEARS. THE POLICE DEPARTMENT MAINTAINS A FILE ON HIM.

EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS ARE NUMEROUS, THOUGH HIGHLY UNRELIABLE.



SUBJECT #14 -- A 68 YEAR OLD MAN IN WASHINGTON SQUARE:

YEAH... I SEEN HIM. TEN FEET TALL, BUILT LIKE A TANK. HE HAS A THREE-HEADED DOG WITH BAT WINGS. THEY SAY HE LIVES IN A PALACE BUILT OUTTA HUMAN BONES DOWN IN THE SEWERS, BUT I THINK THAT'S A BUNCH O' TALK...





WHAT'S IT ABOUT? WHAT YOU'RE WRITING.

IT'S ABOUT A *HOOVER* WITH A *HEART OF GOLD*. I'LL SEND YOU A COPY.

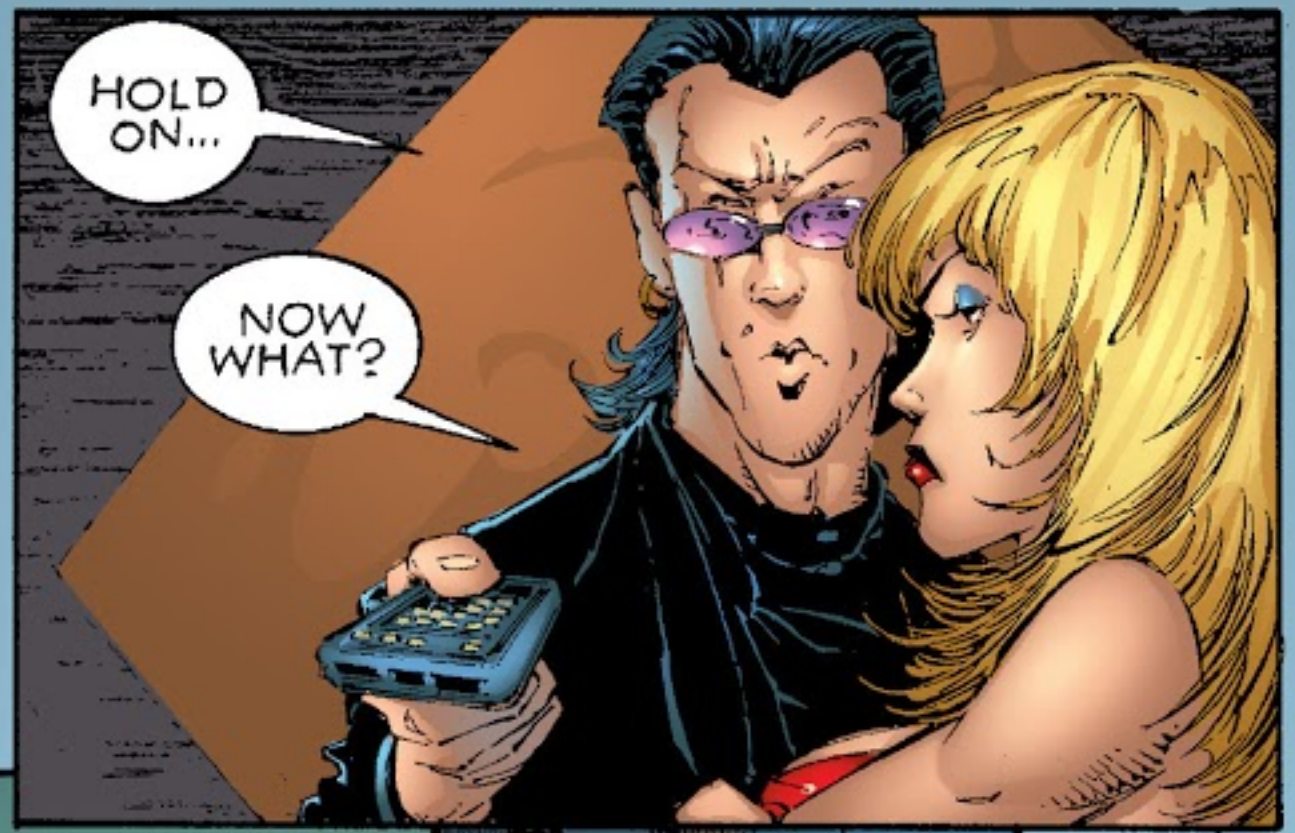
DON'T TALK TO *ME* LIKE THAT. I HAVE A MASTERS FROM *VASSAR*, SMART-ASS. I'M JUST HERE TO PAY THE BILLS. BY THE WAY, THE CLOCK IS RUNNING.



THE END OF THE WORLD.
WHAT?



WHAT I'M WRITING. IT'S ABOUT *THE END OF THE WORLD*.
AH, NO WONDER YOU'RE SO TENSE. SO YOU READY NOW?

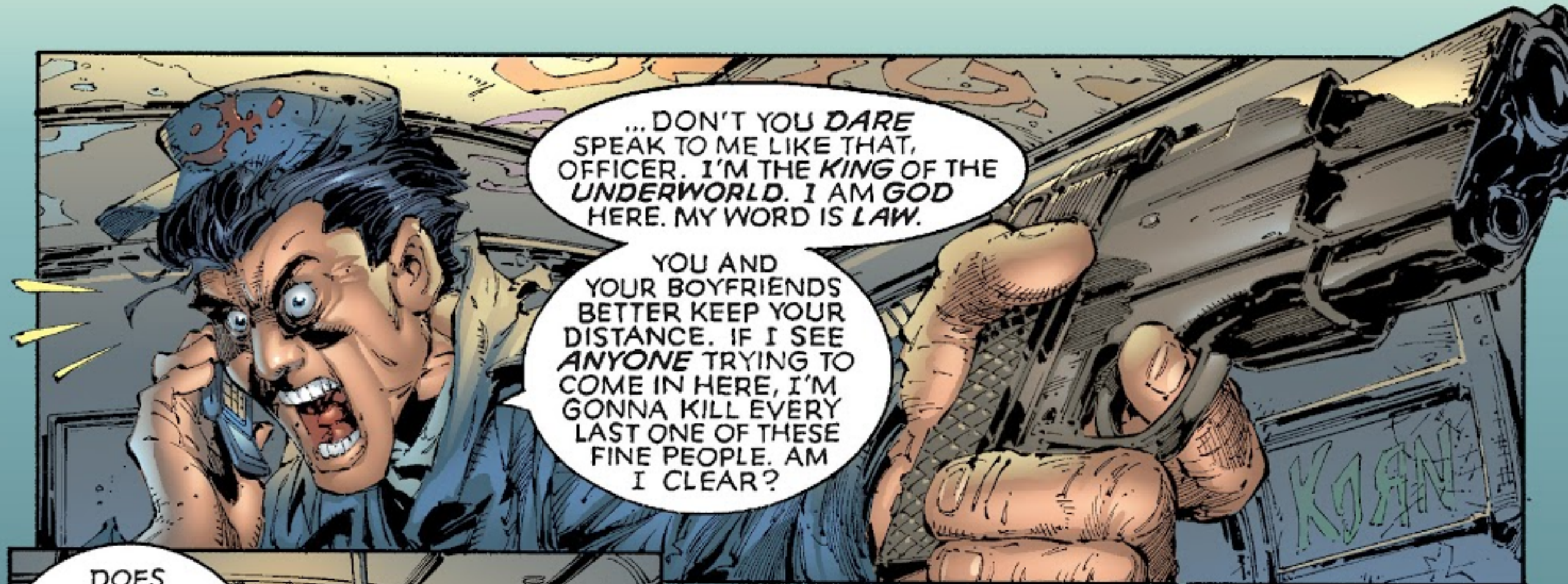


HOLD ON...
NOW WHAT?



I SAID HOLD ON.

...WHERE AN ARMED MAN IS APPARENTLY HOLDING A TRAIN FULL OF PASSENGERS HOSTAGE. POLICE ARE TRYING TO NEGOTIATE HIS SURRENDER BUT HAVE SO FAR BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL...



... DON'T YOU *DARE* SPEAK TO ME LIKE THAT, OFFICER. I'M THE *KING* OF THE *UNDERWORLD*. I AM *GOD* HERE. MY WORD IS *LAW*.

YOU AND YOUR BOYFRIENDS BETTER KEEP YOUR DISTANCE. IF I SEE *ANYONE* TRYING TO COME IN HERE, I'M GONNA KILL EVERY LAST ONE OF THESE FINE PEOPLE. AM I CLEAR?

DOES EVERYONE UNDERSTAND WHO'S IN CHARGE? I AM THE LORD GOD, YOUR SAVIOR. I AM THE CAPTAIN OF YOUR DESTINIES!



HELL, SCREW TOM WOLFE... I AM THE FRIGGIN' MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE.



GOT IT?

BAM BAM

AWW... JEEZUS!

DISAPPOINTED. TERRIBLY DISAPPOINTED. NOW, I GOTTA ASK YOU PEOPLE...



"ANYONE ELSE HERE WANT TO BE A HERO?"





NO? GOOD.
SO LET'S PLAY A
GAME. IT'S CALLED
"WHO WANTS TO GET
OUT OF THE SUBWAY
TRAIN ALIVE?"

LET'S SEE
WHO REALLY
WANTS TO LIVE.
WE'LL BARGAIN
FOR IT. OKAY?
NEGOTIATIONS
ARE NOW
OPEN.



LET'S SEE...
YOU THERE.
YEAH, YOU
BUDDY...

IF I, AS YOUR GOD,
ASKED YOU TO STOMP
MR. KNEECAPS HERE TO
DEATH IN EXCHANGE FOR
YOUR FREEDOM, WOULD
YOU DO IT? YES? NO?



ANYONE?
WE'RE NEGO-
TIATING,
FOLKS. AN
HOUR FROM
NOW YOU'LL BE
BEGGING
FOR THIS
DEAL.

IT'S
SIMPLE.
WHAT
ARE YOU
WILLING TO
DO TO GET OUT
OF HERE **ALIVE**?
EVERYONE
HAS THEIR
PRICE.



WHAT
ABOUT YOU,
LADY? CUTE
KID YOU GOT
THERE. WHAT'S
YOUR NAME,
SONNY?

I BET
YOUR MOM
LOVES YOU A
WHOLE LOT,
huh? I BET
SHE'D DO JUST
ABOUT ANYTHING
TO KEEP YOU
FROM AN EARLY
GRAVE. AM I
RIGHT?



WHAT'S THAT
SAYING? ONLY THE
GOOD DIE YOUNG?
YOU A GOOD BOY,
KID?

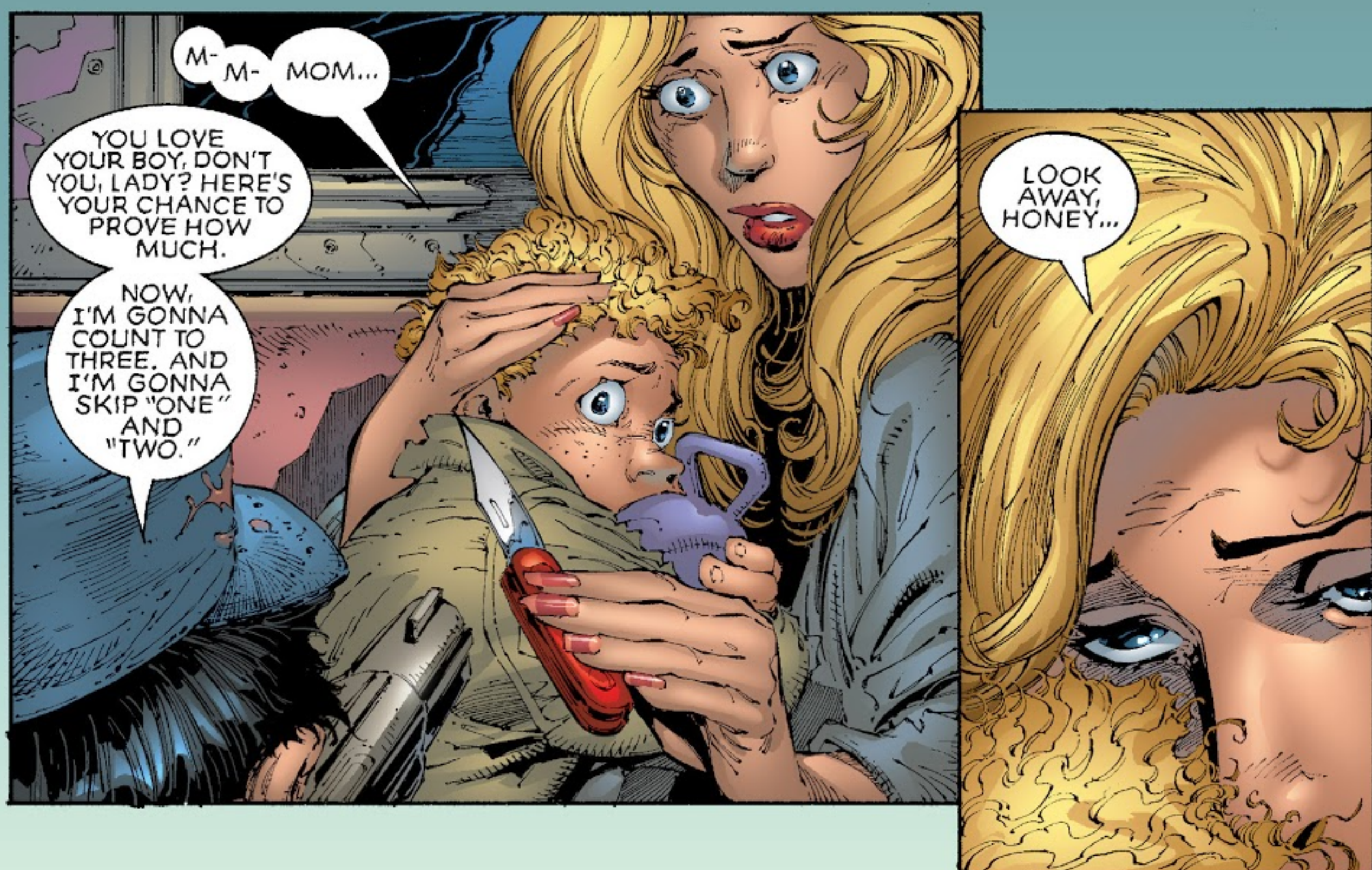
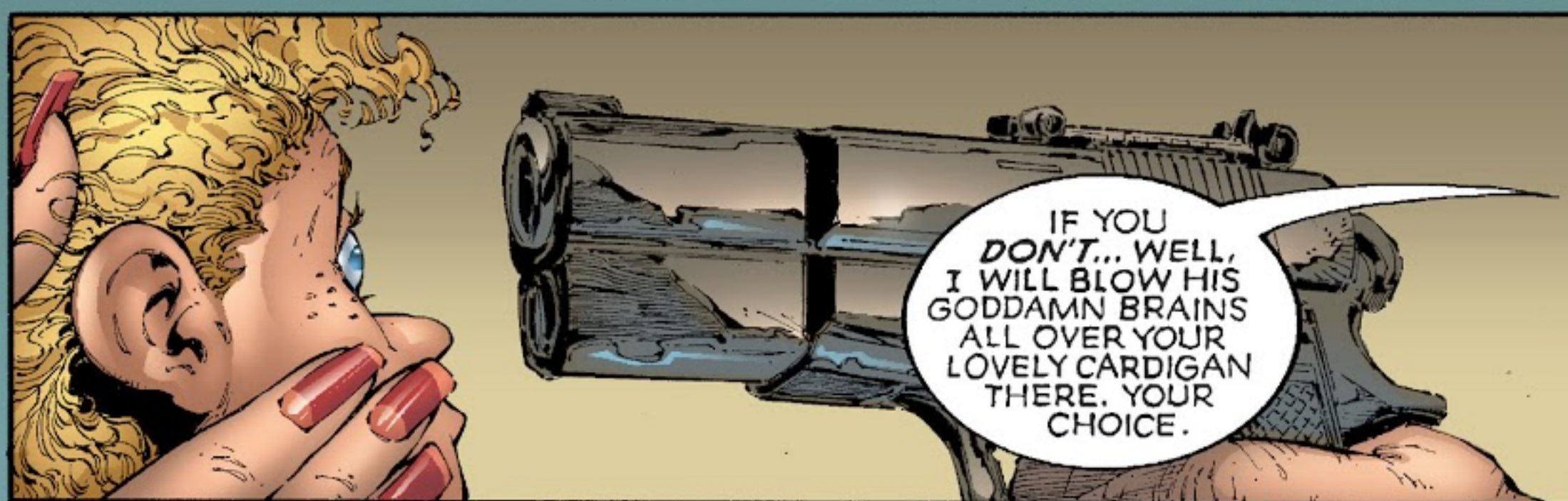
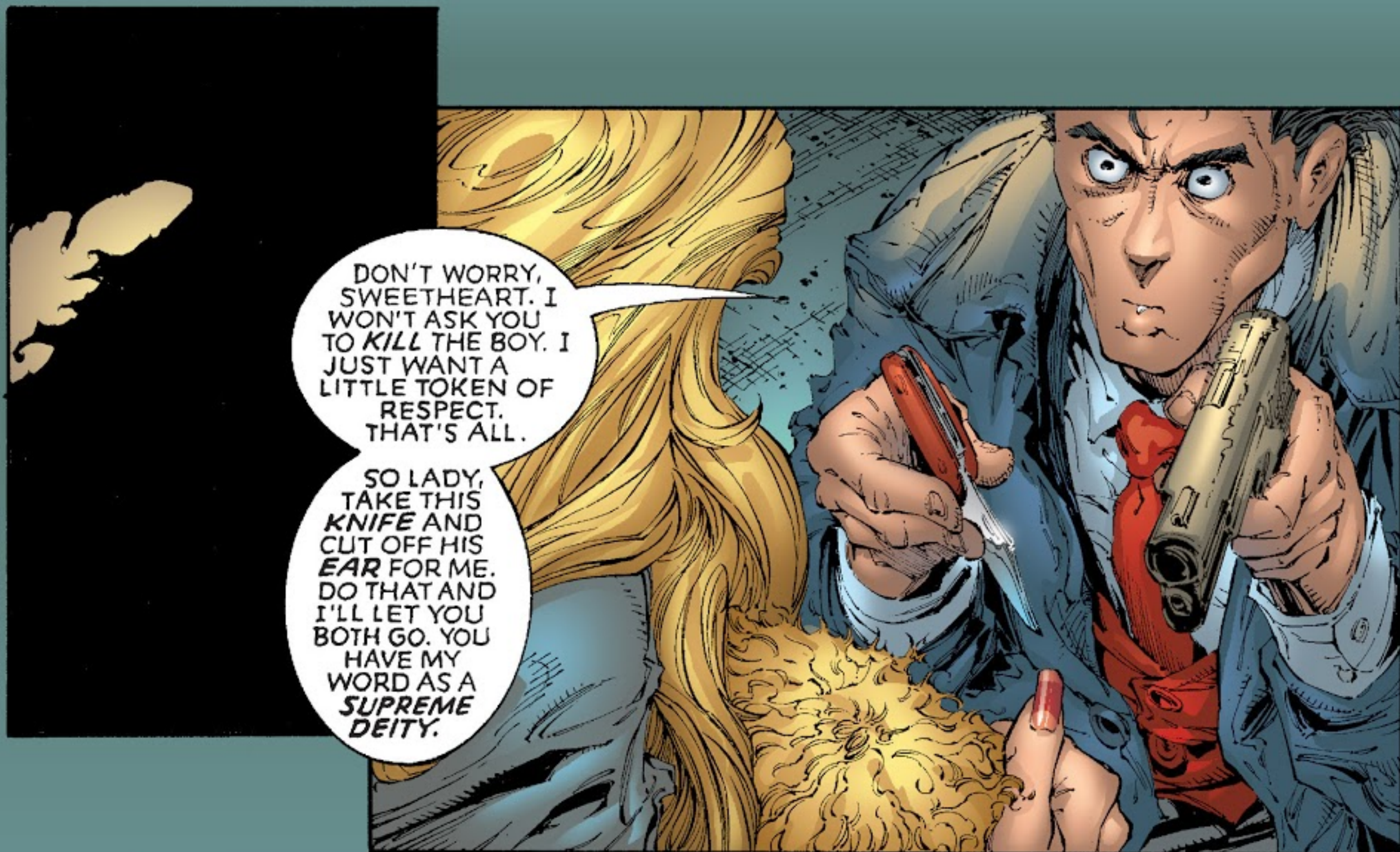
**GET
AWAY
FROM
HIM.
YOU'RE
SICK!**



I AM GOD!
THERE'S NO
ESCAPING ME.

DO YOU
REMEMBER THE
BIBLE? REMEMBER
WHERE GOD TELLS
ABRAHAM TO KILL HIS
OWN SON TO SHOW THE
BIG MAN A LITTLE
RESPECT?
HUH?!

DIDN'T
YOU TEACH
YOUR BOY
HIS BIBLE,
LADY?



KABOOM!





WHAT
THE
HELL IS
THAT?

I
CAN'T
SEE!

WHAT'S
GOING
ON?



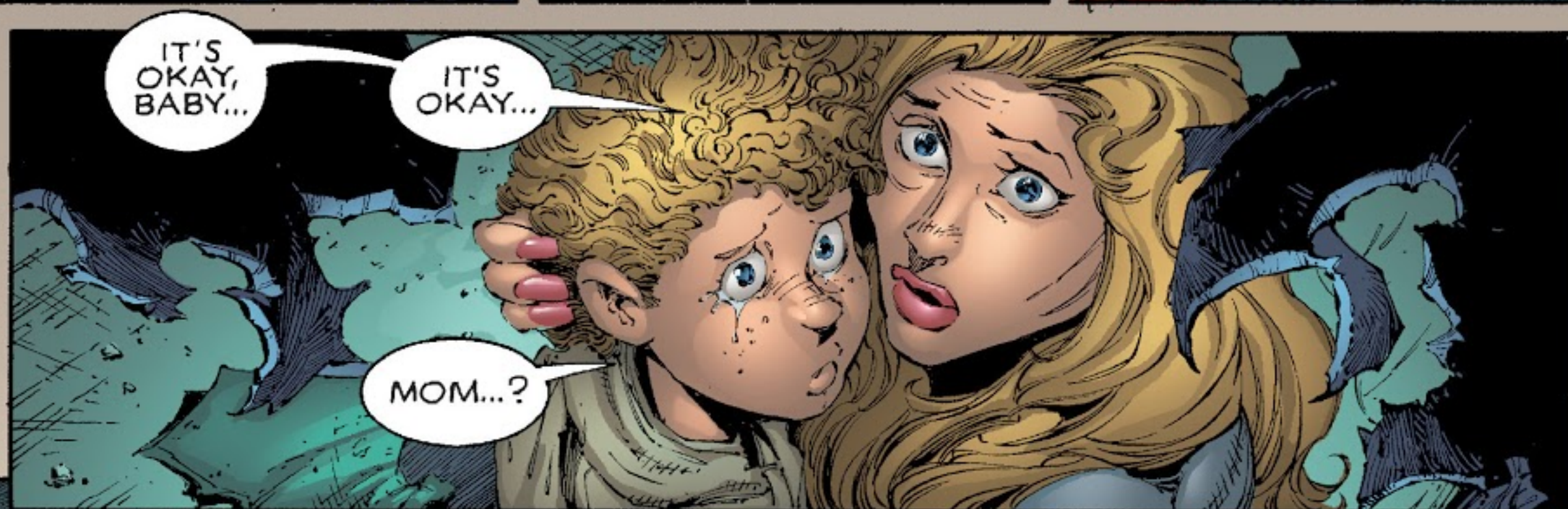
GET OUT
OF HIM,
BILLY!

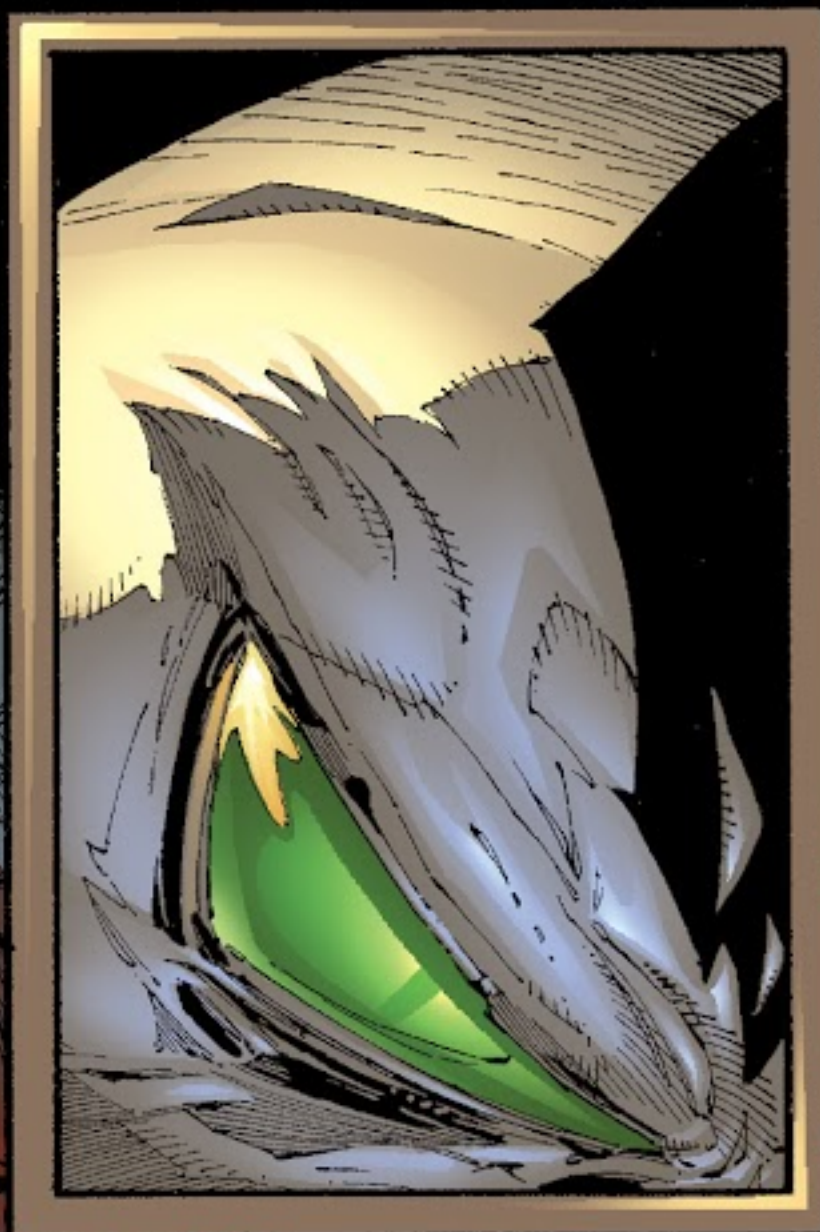
I KNOW
YOU'RE IN
THERE... NOW
**GET
OUT!!**

Gugh -
guugh...



DON'T
DIE ON ME,
MISTER.
DON'T YOU
DIE ON
ME...





QUEENS, NEW YORK.
THE FOLLOWING DAY.
TWILIGHT.

UPPIE,
GRANNA!
UPPIE!

READY
FOR SOME
COFFEE,
GRANNY?

THAT
WOULD
BE LOVELY,
WANDA.
THANK
YOU.

CYAN,
WOULD
YOU LIKE
A JUICE
BOX?

YES,
PEESE.

SUCH GOOD
MANNERS,
CYAN. YOU ARE
GROWING UP
INTO SUCH A
BEAUTIFUL GIRL.
YOU LOOK JUST
LIKE YOUR
MOTHER.

HOW
DO YOU
KNOW?

WHA'S
WRONG,
GRANNY?



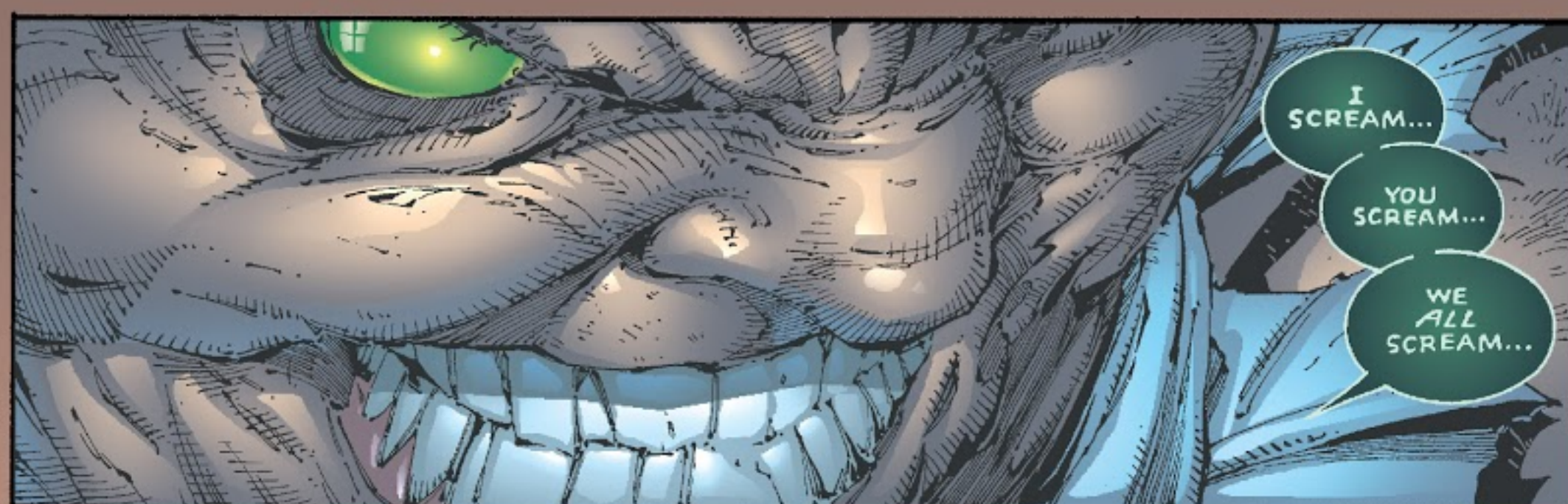


YOU THERE!
GET AWAY FROM
HERE! DON'T THINK
JUST 'CAUSE I'M
BLIND, I CAN'T
SEE YOU!

GRANNY,
WHO YOU
TALKIN'
TO?



I AIN'T
AFRAID OF
YOU, MISTER!
I AIN'T AFRAID!
NOW GET ON
OUT OF HERE!
AND DON'T YOU
COME BACK,
EVER!



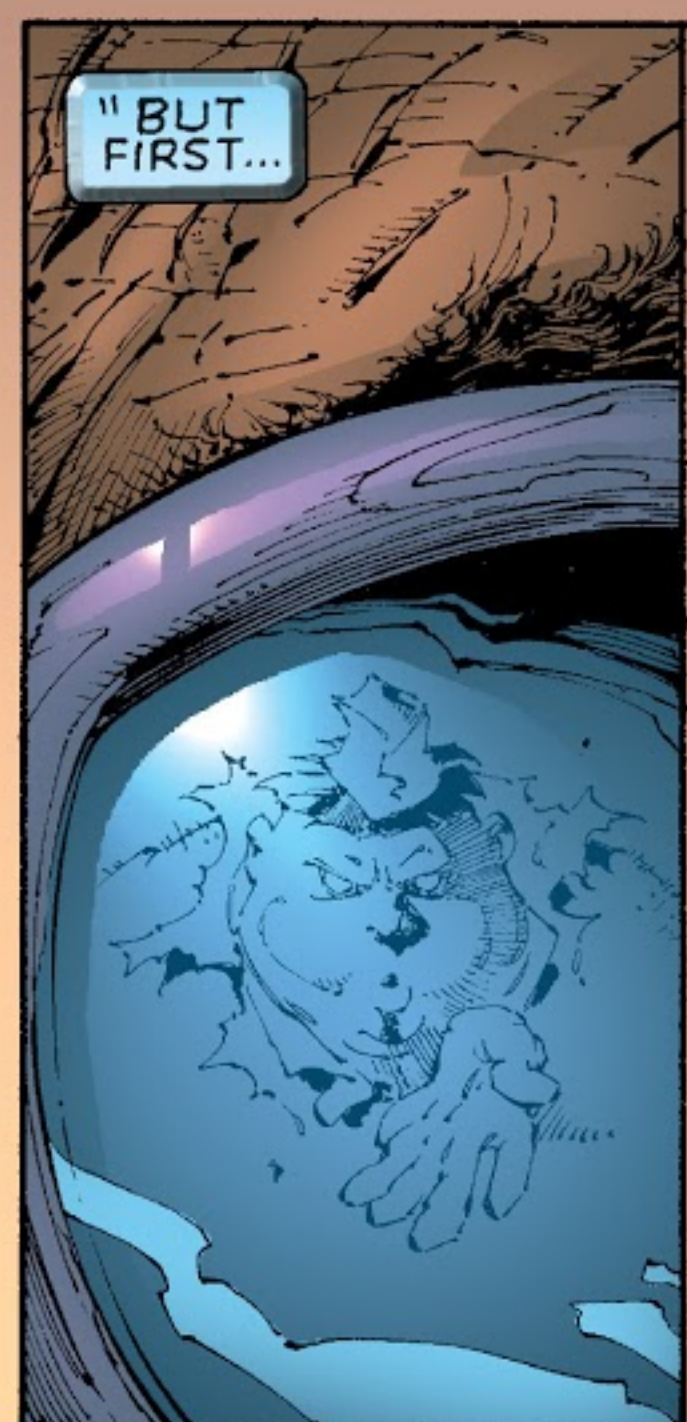
I
SCREAM...

YOU
SCREAM...

WE
ALL
SCREAM...



BYE BYE
LITTLE
GIRL... I'LL
BE BACK.



"BUT
FIRST..."

"...I KNOW
SOMEONE
WE CAN
HAVE SOME
REAL FUN
WITH..."



NEXT: THE RETURN OF

JASON WYNN



83

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN



Capullo
McFarlane

D:

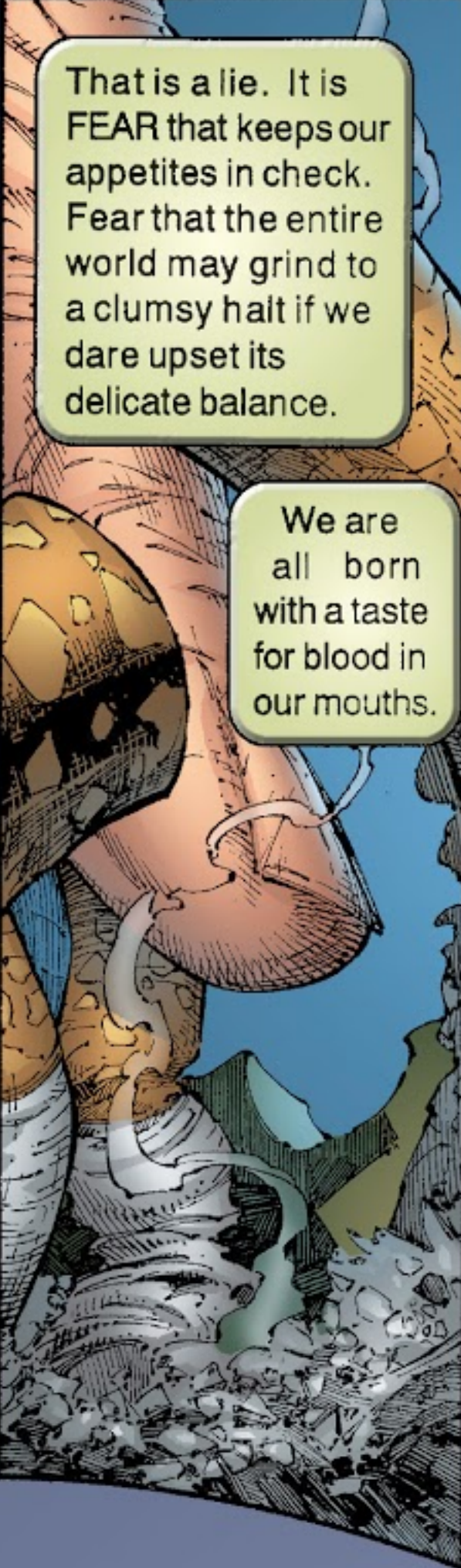


We all have
our ghosts.

Each of us is
far closer to
the brink of
madness than
we would
ever care to
admit.

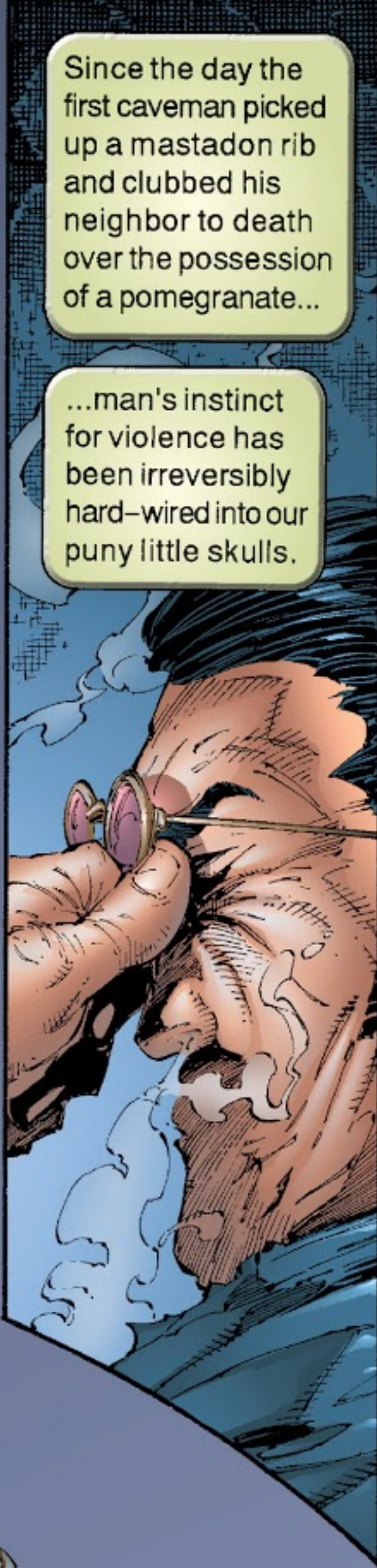


We lead lives of quiet
obedience and tell
ourselves that it is
our own good nature,
the "higher angels
of our being," that
keep us from the
path of destruction.



That is a lie. It is
FEAR that keeps our
appetites in check.
Fear that the entire
world may grind to
a clumsy halt if we
dare upset its
delicate balance.

We are
all born
with a taste
for blood in
our mouths.



Since the day the
first caveman picked
up a mastadon rib
and clubbed his
neighbor to death
over the possession
of a pomegranate...

...man's instinct
for violence has
been irreversibly
hard-wired into our
puny little skulls.



A small, stabbing voice in the back
of our head, telling us to take what
we want. To stab our neighbor in the
back. After all, doesn't he deserve it?

Usually we can
ignore that voice.
Brush it aside.
We would never
dare admit to such
thoughts in polite
company.

But sometimes,
we listen to it...

Sometimes, we
get up in the morn-
ing, decide we have
had enough, and
calmly, methodically
proceed to do the
UNTHINKABLE...



Esther Paxney, 51, had worked as a lunch lady at a Staten Island junior high school for more than 20 years.



Last week, out of the blue, she decides to dollop a spoonful of STRYCHNINE into each child's serving of apple sauce.



Forty children were hospitalized. Seven fatalities. She could offer no motive for her actions and died mysteriously while in police custody.

A day later... Peter Van Nies, an off-duty police officer from Trenton, N.J., is stuck in rush hour traffic on the Brooklyn Bridge. Like others, he loses his temper.



Unlike others, he stands on the roof of his Nissan and empties his service revolver into the neighboring cars before diving to his death off the bridge.



Three wounded, two dead.

Two days ago, Manhattan. Horace Mansard, a bank manager one month short of retirement, goes to work just as he does every day.

He enters the elevator, smiles his "good mornings" and presses the button for the 14th floor.

As soon as the doors close, he produces a sawn-off shotgun from under his coat and proceeds to kill the six other passengers in the elevator car...



...before turning the gun on himself.

Three more pearls on a lengthening string of violence.

As we race headlong toward the end of history, something has gone terribly wrong. There's blood in the water, folks.

What is it that is driving so many people over the edge?

What could possibly be possessing them?



The answer? Their own HUMANITY.

KINCAID IS BACK.

THOUGHT I WAS DOING THE WORLD A SOLID FAVOR WHEN I SENT THAT SCUMBAG TO HELL.

NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE. I WASN'T THINKING ANYTHING. I JUST DID IT. YOU MOLEST INNOCENT KIDS AND KILL THEM, YOU DESERVE TO DIE. SIMPLE AS THAT.

BUT THE JOKE WAS ON ME. KILLING HIM ONLY MADE HIM STRONGER.

NOW HE'S BACK SOMEHOW, WASHING THIS CITY IN BLOOD. DRIVING PEOPLE TO GIVE IN TO THEIR DARKEST IMPULSES...

... AND THEN COLLECTING THEIR DAMNED SOULS FOR THE SINS HE FORCED THEM TO COMMIT.

I CAN HEAR HIM LAUGHING INSIDE MY HEAD. HE'S LOVING EVERY MINUTE OF IT.

BUT IT'S NOT JUST SPORT TO HIM. HE WANTS REVENGE ON EVERYONE WHO WRONGED HIM IN LIFE.

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO STOP HIM. NO MATTER WHAT I DO... IT TURNS WRONG.

I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO TURN...

THREE
MILLION
BUCKS?!!
THREE MILLION
FREAKIN' DOLLARS
FOR A GODDAMN
BASEBALL..?

COUGH-
HAUCK-

BREATHE,
SIR. JUST
RELAX...

IN
FUTURE,
TRY
CHEWING
THE DOUGH-
NUTS.

GLUUPH-
GOD
DAMMIT!

CAN YOU BELIEVE
IT? YOU 'N' ME PUT TO-
GETHER ARE WORTH LESS
THAN ONE STITCH ON
THAT SUCKER.

IT DOES
SEEM
EXCESSIVE.
STILL, IF HE CAN
AFFORD
IT...

OK, AND GET
THIS... HE'S FROM
CANADA. CROWN JEWEL
OF AMERICA'S PASTTIME BOUGHT
UP BY SOME NUTTY FOREIGNER...
GODDAMN NAFTA.

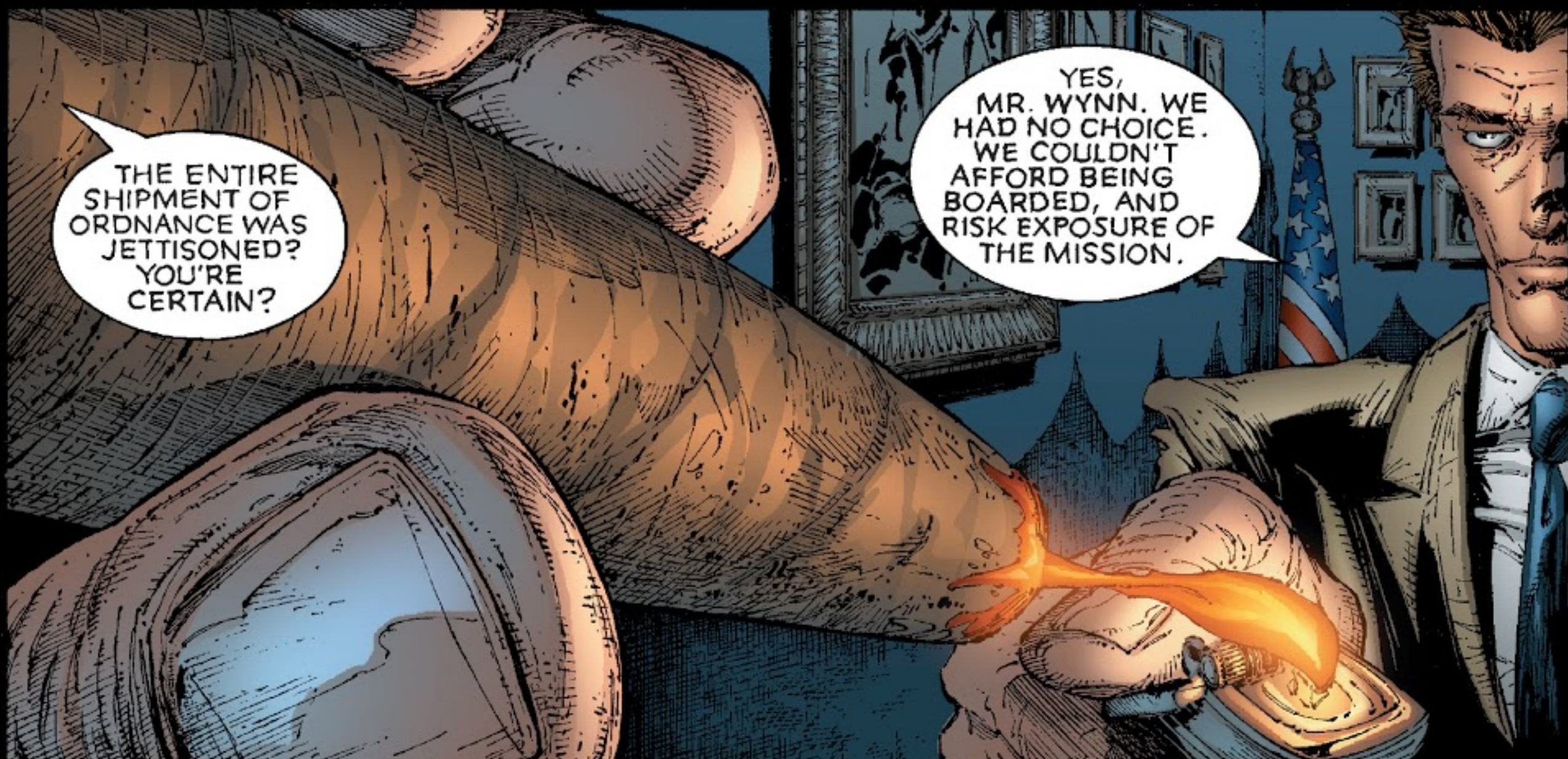
I HARDLY
THINK IT'S A
FAIR TRADE
ISSUE, SIR. LOOK
HERE. IT SAYS HE'S
PUTTING THE BALL
ON TOUR AND
DONATING THE
PROCEEDS TO
CHARITY...

YEAH, RIGHT.
BET HIS P.R. AGENT
MADE THAT UP TO
MAKE HIM LOOK GOOD.
LOOK AT THIS CLOWN.
WHAT A **TOOL!**
MAN, I **HATE**
RICH PEOPLE.

Todd McFarlane
Master of the
mos and friend
he devil himself
d took his soul
gs and offered
billion dollars
baseball
being
and

Todd with his prized ball
the owner of the
the ball





THE ENTIRE SHIPMENT OF ORDNANCE WAS JETTISONED? YOU'RE CERTAIN?

YES, MR. WYNN. WE HAD NO CHOICE. WE COULDN'T AFFORD BEING BOARDED, AND RISK EXPOSURE OF THE MISSION.

WHAT ABOUT WITNESSES? WHO ELSE KNOWS THIS?

NO ONE, SIR. ANY POTENTIAL WITNESSES WERE ELIMINATED BEFORE WE REACHED PORT. AFTER THAT, I CAME STRAIGHT TO YOU.

I CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR DISAPPOINTMENT, SIR, BUT IT WAS A JUDGMENT CALL. I REALLY HAD NO ALTERNATIVE.



YOU DID THE **RIGHT** THING COMING TO ME RALEIGH.

WHILE IT'S UNFORTUNATE THAT THE MISSION HAD TO BE SCRAPPED, YOU AT LEAST MANAGED TO STAVE OFF ANY FURTHER... MESSINESS.

WELL DONE.



THANK YOU, SIR.

THIS IS WYNN. AGENT RALEIGH HAS JUST LEFT MY OFFICE. SEE TO IT THAT HE IS **ERASED**, IMMEDIATELY.



JASON WYNN
IS A MAN ON
THE EDGE.

AMATEURS.
GODDAMN
IT... HEAD'S
KILLING ME.

FORMER DIRECTOR OF
U.S. GOVERNMENT
SECURITY, HE WAS
RECENTLY REASSIGNED
TO HEAD A NEW
SENSITIVE OPERATIONS
TASK FORCE.

NO ONE
WOULD DARE
CALL IT A
DEMOTION,
TO HIS FACE,
BUT HE KNOWS
THAT'S JUST
WHAT IT IS.

No... NO...
PLEASE
HAVE
MERCY!

HE CAN FEEL THE
PRESSURE
MOUNTING. THE
WOLVES ARE AT
THE DOOR.

Huh?

WHAT
THE
HELL WAS
THAT?

READY TO SNAP. ALL HE
NEEDS IS A LITTLE PUSH...

JASON WYNN IS A
MAN WHO CRAVES
ONE THING ABOVE
ALL ELSE:

CONTROL.

BUT THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE
INSIDE HIM. SOMETHING
RECKLESS AND RUTHLESS.

A VOICE, ROUGH AND COARSE,
THAT CALLS TO HIM:

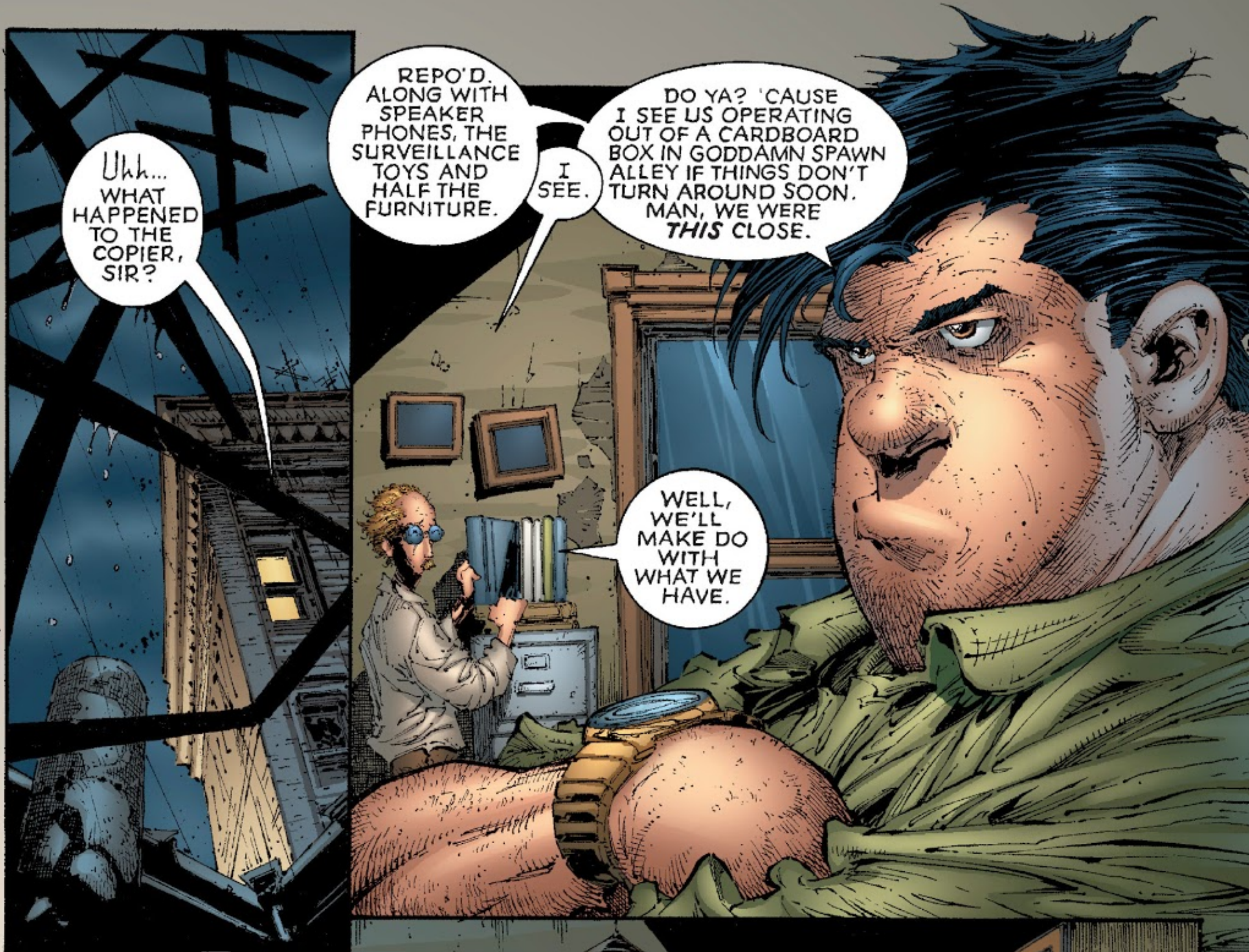
TAKE WHAT YOU WANT.
DON'T LET ANYONE
STAND IN YOUR WAY.

THIS IS NO
TIME FOR
SUBTLE
MANEUVERS,
JASON. NO
TIME FOR
MACHIA-
VELLIAN
SCHEMING.

THIS IS A TIME
FOR SHEER,
BLOODY FORCE.

YES, JASON.
GIVE IN TO IT.
YOU'LL FEEL
BETTER IN
THE END...

IN THE DISTANCE, HE
HEARS WAR DRUMS
AND THE THUNDERING
OF HOOVES...



Uhh...
WHAT
HAPPENED
TO THE
COPIER,
SIR?

REPO'D.
ALONG WITH
SPEAKER
PHONES, THE
SURVEILLANCE
TOYS AND
HALF THE
FURNITURE.

I
SEE.

DO YA? 'CAUSE
I SEE US OPERATING
OUT OF A CARDBOARD
BOX IN GODDAMN SPAWN
ALLEY IF THINGS DON'T
TURN AROUND SOON.
MAN, WE WERE
THIS CLOSE.

WELL,
WE'LL
MAKE DO
WITH
WHAT WE
HAVE.

HOW DO YOU
DO IT, TWITCH? HOW
DO YOU STAY SO CALM?
I MEAN, YOU'RE LIKE AN
ICE MAN. DON'T YOU
GOT **NO** FEELINGS
OR NOTHIN'?

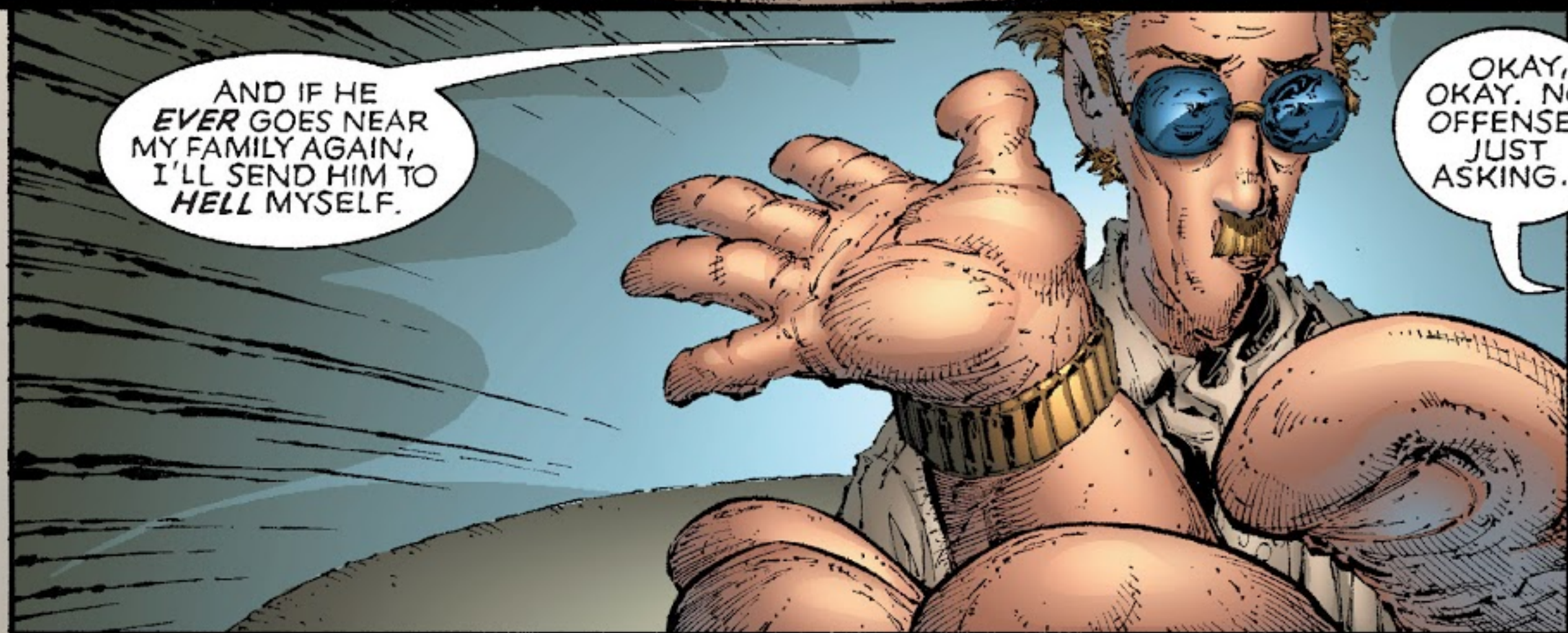
KINCAID WENT
AFTER MY FAMILY,
SAM. MY **FAMILY**. I
REMAIN CALM BE-
CAUSE IT'S THE BEST
WAY TO SOLVE THE
CASE BEFORE
US.

IF I LET MY
EMOTIONS GET THE
BETTER OF ME, THEN I
COULD GET SLOPPY. IF
I GET SLOPPY, I
COULD MISS
SOMETHING.

MAKE NO
MISTAKE. WE
WILL FIND A WAY
TO STOP KINCAID.
I DON'T KNOW
HOW, BUT
WE WILL.

AND IF HE
EVER GOES NEAR
MY FAMILY AGAIN,
I'LL SEND HIM TO
HELL MYSELF.

OKAY,
OKAY. NO
OFFENSE.
JUST
ASKING...





"SO, uh... HEY... SPEAKING OF MISSING ITEMS, WHAT DID YOU END UP DOING WITH THAT SEVERED HEAD BILLY LEFT US AS A VALENTINE?"

"DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, SIR. I HAD A FRIEND TAKE CARE OF IT."



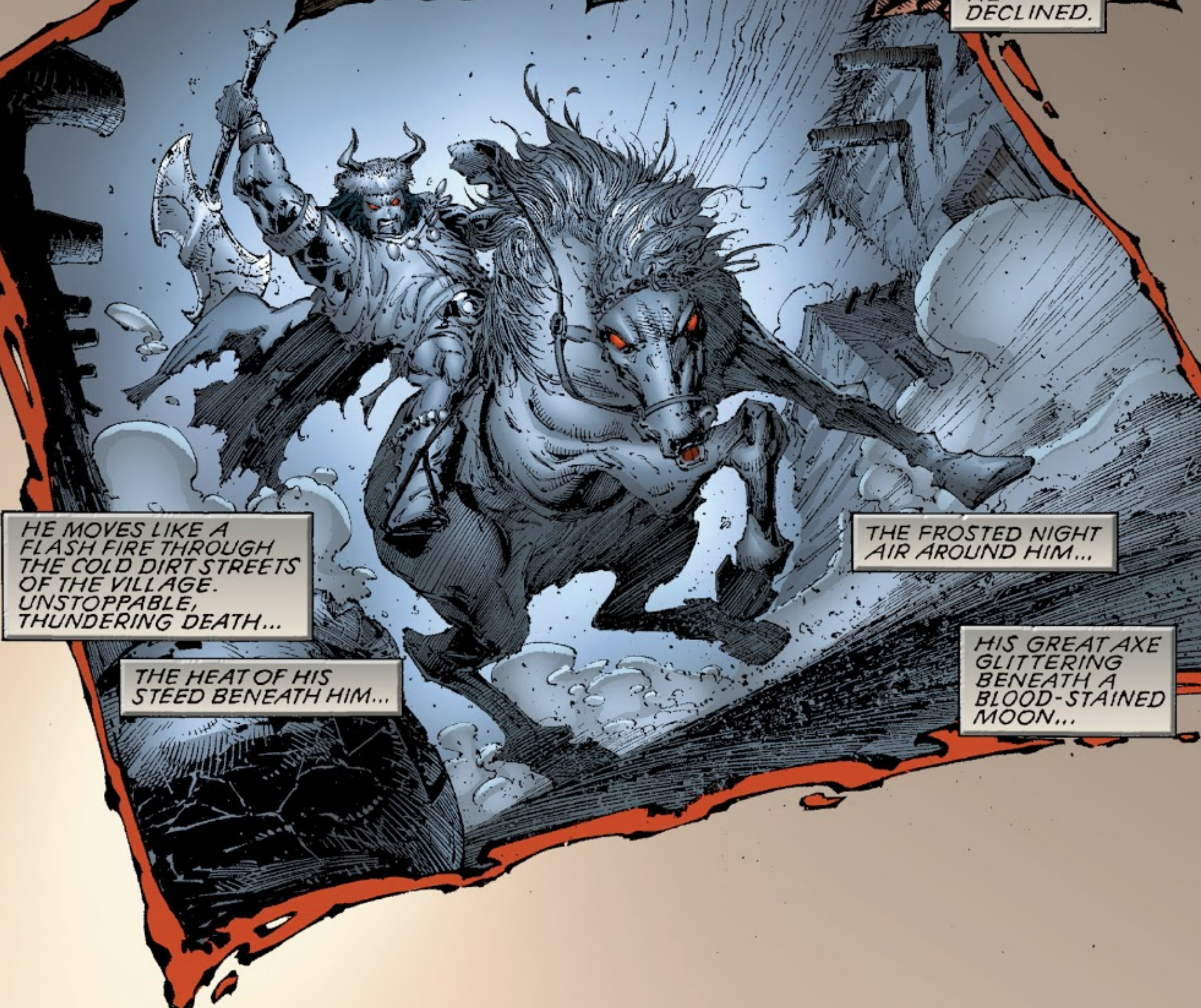
THE GREAT CONQUEROR
APPROACHED THE
VILLAGE JUST AFTER
MIDNIGHT.

HE HEARD THE PEAL
OF ALARM BELLS AS
THE ENEMY CAMP
SPRUNG TO ALERT.

A MESSENGER GREETED HIM,
OFFERING HIM TRIBUTE
FROM THE CHIEFTAIN.

TABLE
FOR ONE?

HE
DECLINED.



HE MOVES LIKE A
FLASH FIRE THROUGH
THE COLD DIRT STREETS
OF THE VILLAGE.
UNSTOPPABLE,
THUNDERING DEATH...

THE HEAT OF HIS
STEED BENEATH HIM...

THE FROSTED NIGHT
AIR AROUND HIM...

HIS GREAT AXE
GLITTERING
BENEATH A
BLOOD-STAINED
MOON...

THE GODLESS HORDES OF THE CONQUEROR MADE QUICK WORK OF THE VILLAGE.

ANOTHER TROPHY FOR HIS LODGE, ANOTHER PELT TO WARM HIM BY THE FIRE.

BLAM

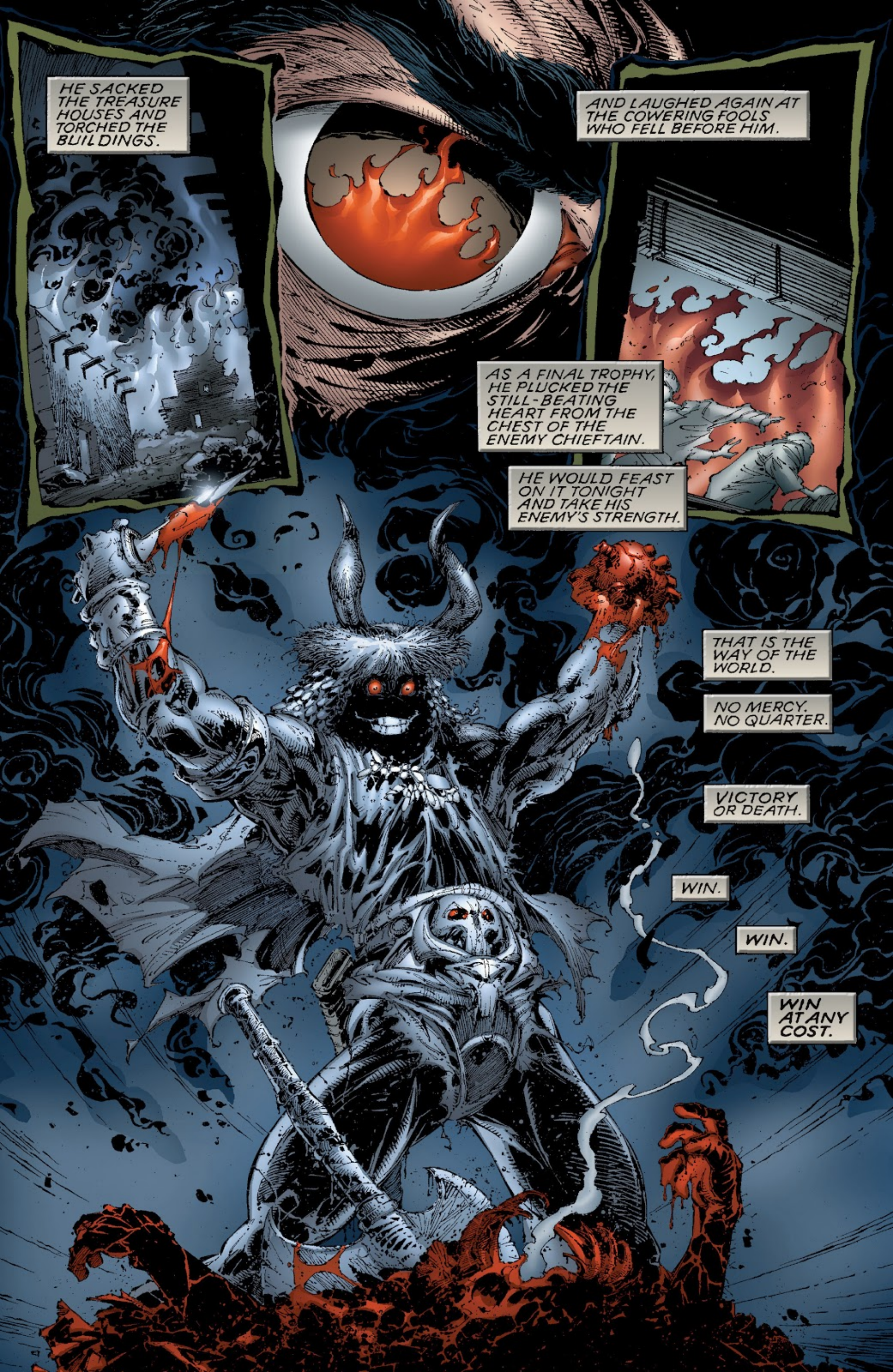
HOT BLOOD SEEPED INTO THE COLD, HARD GROUND AND THE GREAT KHAN'S SPIRIT BRIMMED WITH LAUGHTER.

THERE WAS NO MAN ALIVE WHO DID NOT FEAR HIM.

NO WIFE OR MOTHER WHO DID NOT DREAD HIS ARRIVAL.

NO CHILD WHO DID NOT SHUDDER AT THE MEREST WHISPER OF HIS NAME.

NO ARMY THAT COULD STAND BEFORE HIS CRUEL ONSLAUGHT.



HE SACKED
THE TREASURE
HOUSES AND
TORCHED THE
BUILDINGS.

AND LAUGHED AGAIN AT
THE COWERING FOOLS
WHO FELL BEFORE HIM.

AS A FINAL TROPHY,
HE PLUCKED THE
STILL-BEATING
HEART FROM THE
CHEST OF THE
ENEMY CHIEFTAIN.

HE WOULD FEAST
ON IT TONIGHT
AND TAKE HIS
ENEMY'S STRENGTH.

THAT IS THE
WAY OF THE
WORLD.

NO MERCY.
NO QUARTER.

VICTORY
OR DEATH.

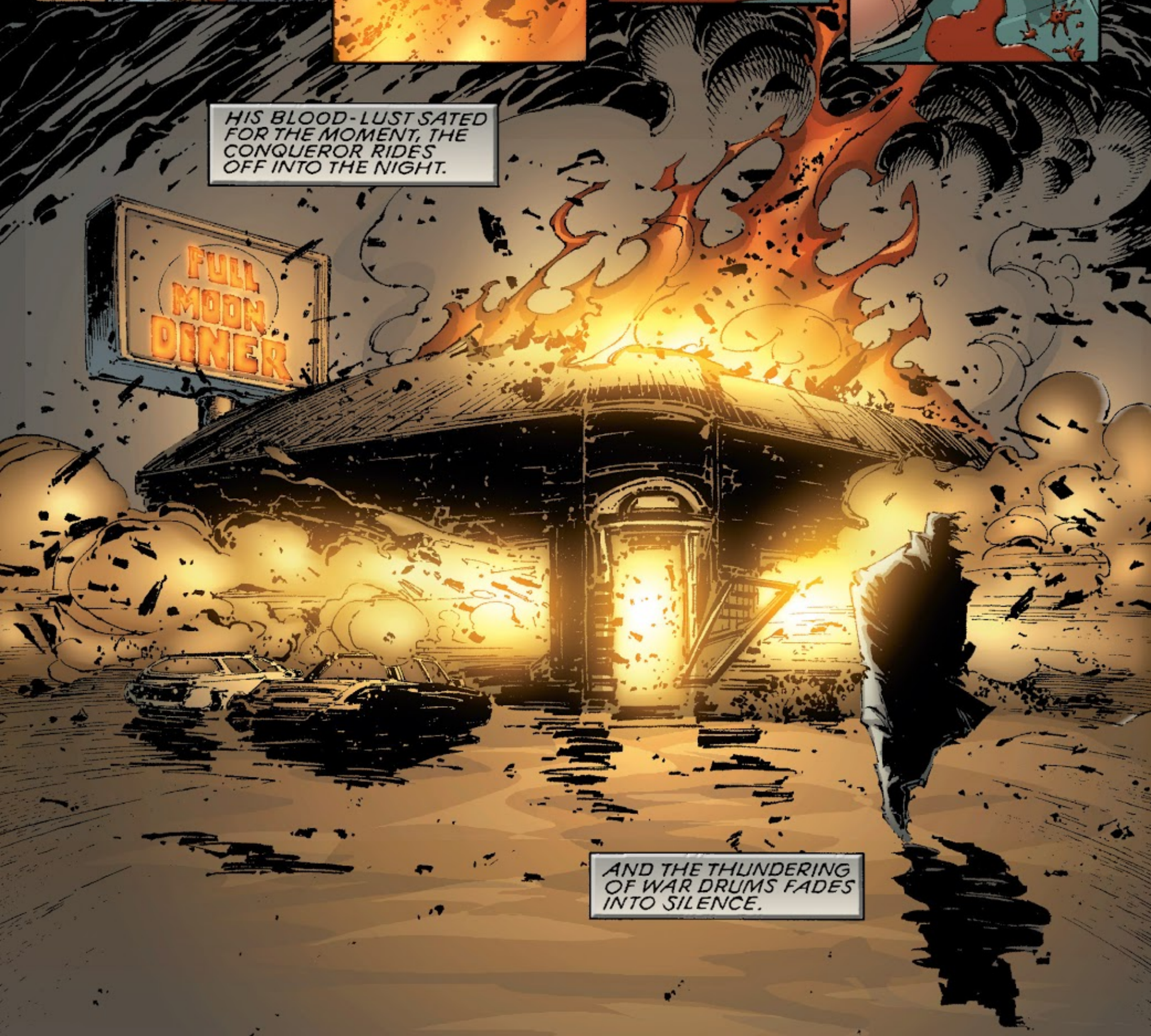
WIN.

WIN.

WIN
AT ANY
COST.



HIS BLOOD-LUST SATIATED
FOR THE MOMENT, THE
CONQUEROR RIDES
OFF INTO THE NIGHT.



AND THE THUNDERING
OF WAR DRUMS FADES
INTO SILENCE.

CHRIST!
WHAT A
FRIGGIN'
MESS.

I SWEAR,
THIS
WHOLE
CITY IS
GOING TO
HELL.

HOW
BAD IS IT
INSIDE,
SILBERT?

A MASSACRE.
IT LOOKS LIKE *RIB
NIGHT* AT THE *BBQ
HUT*. GONNA HAVE TO
PRY SOME OF THOSE
POOR BASTARDS
APART JUST TO
I.D. THEM.

ANY MOTIVE,
DETECTIVE?

WHAT, LIKE THERE'S
A GOOD REASON TO
DO THIS? *PHAW*!
WHO NEEDS MOTIVES
ANY MORE?

SUSPECTS?
ANY LEADS
AT ALL?

NOT YET.
PROBABLY
GONNA TAKE
A WHILE. SO
WHAT ABOUT
YOU GUYS?

WHY DO
I GET THE
FEELING YOU
KNOW MORE
THAN YOU'RE
SAYING?



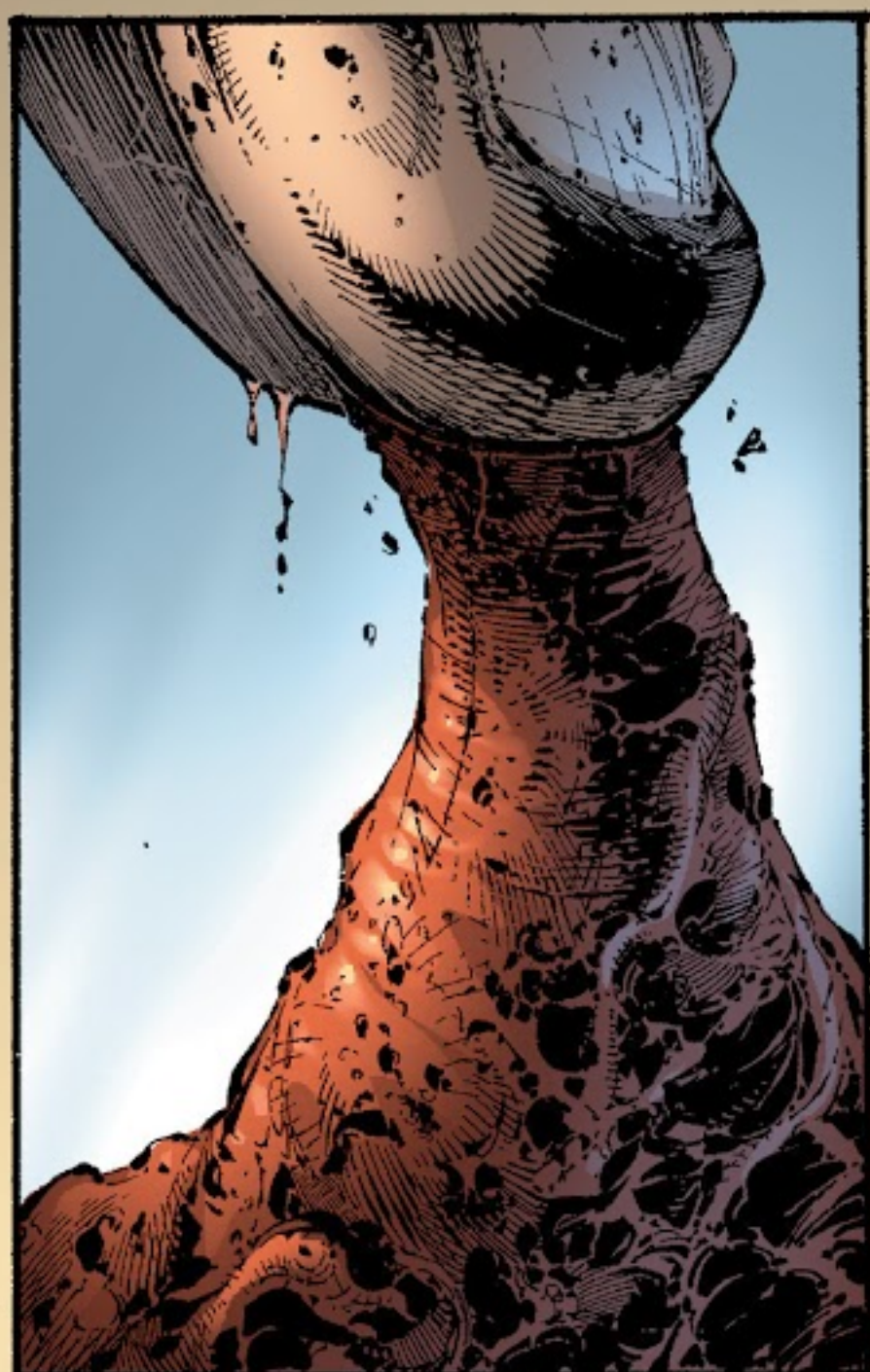
UGHNN...



WHERE...

YAAGH!

WHAT THE F--!
HOW DID I
GET HERE?



GOD
DAMN
IT...



VISION FOGGY,
HEAD THROBBING,
JASON WYNN
TRIES TO MAKE
SENSE OF HIS
SITUATION.

ABDUCTED?
DRUGGED,
PERHAPS?

GET IT TOGETHER,
JASON. WORK
THE PROBLEM.

ABOVE ALL,
STAY IN
CONTROL...

HELLO?
YEAH, THIS
IS WYNN.
CONNECT ME
THROUGH TO
CENTRAL--



GIMME
DAT
PHONE,
BITCH!

GET OFF
ME! DO YOU
HAVE ANY
IDEA WHO
YOU'RE...
UFF!

SHUT
YOUR
MOUTH,
ASSWIPE.

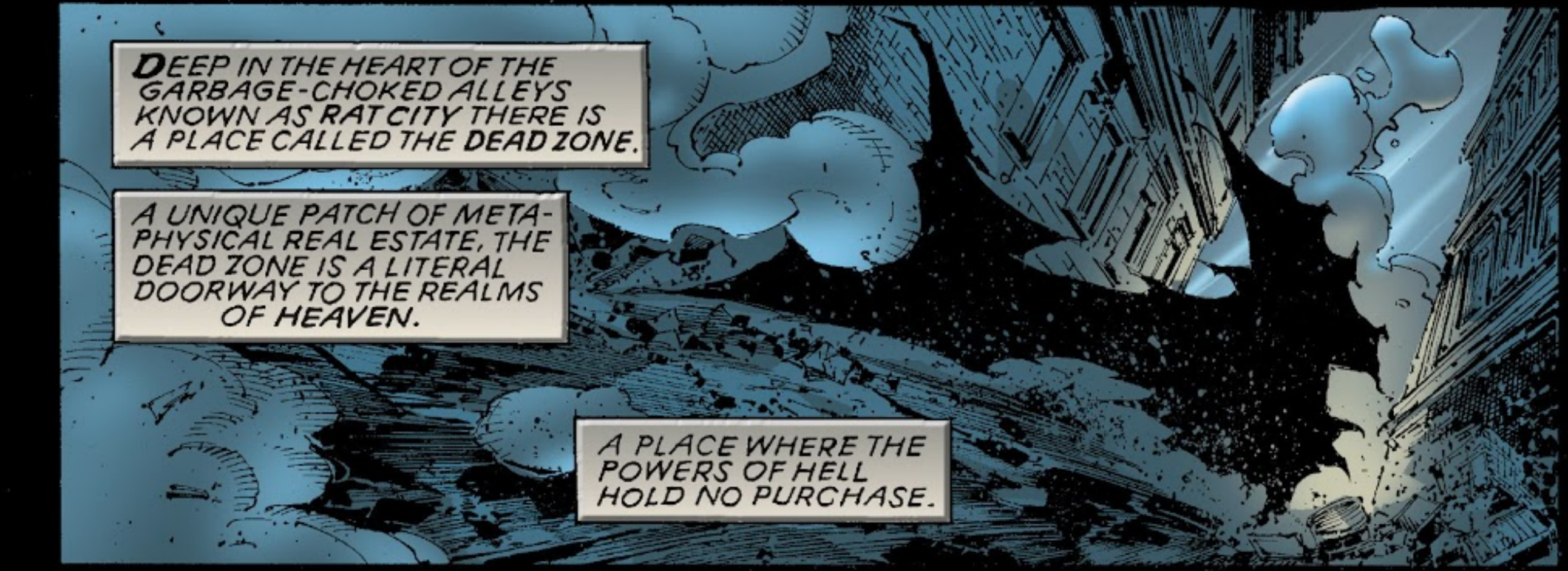


GOT THE
PHONE?

YUP.
GOT HIS
WALLET?

OH
YEAH.

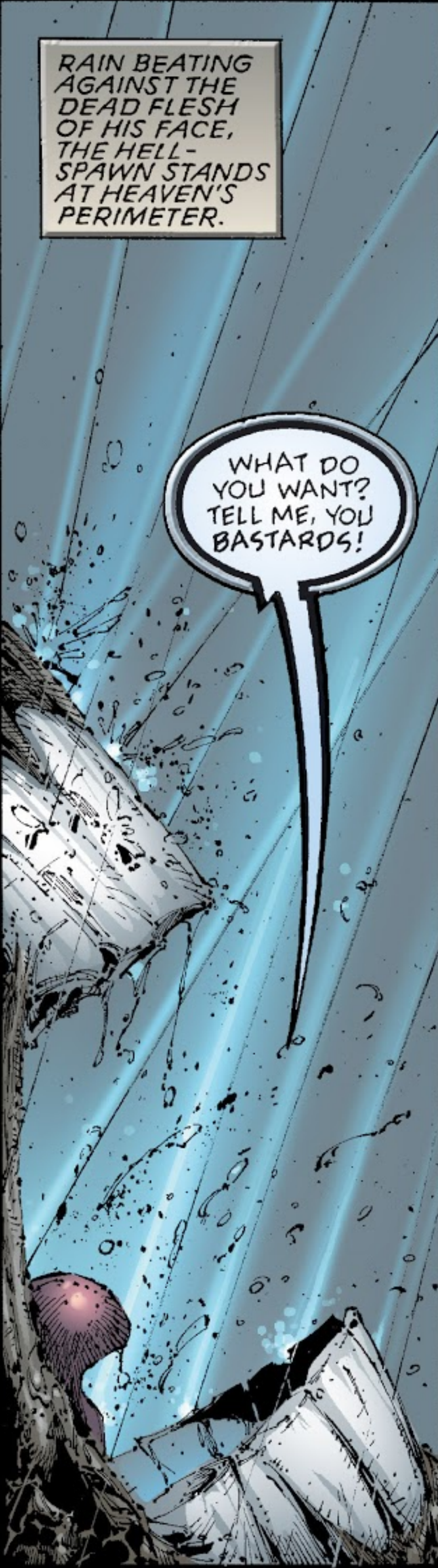




DEEP IN THE HEART OF THE GARBAGE-CHOKED ALLEYS KNOWN AS RAT CITY THERE IS A PLACE CALLED THE DEAD ZONE.

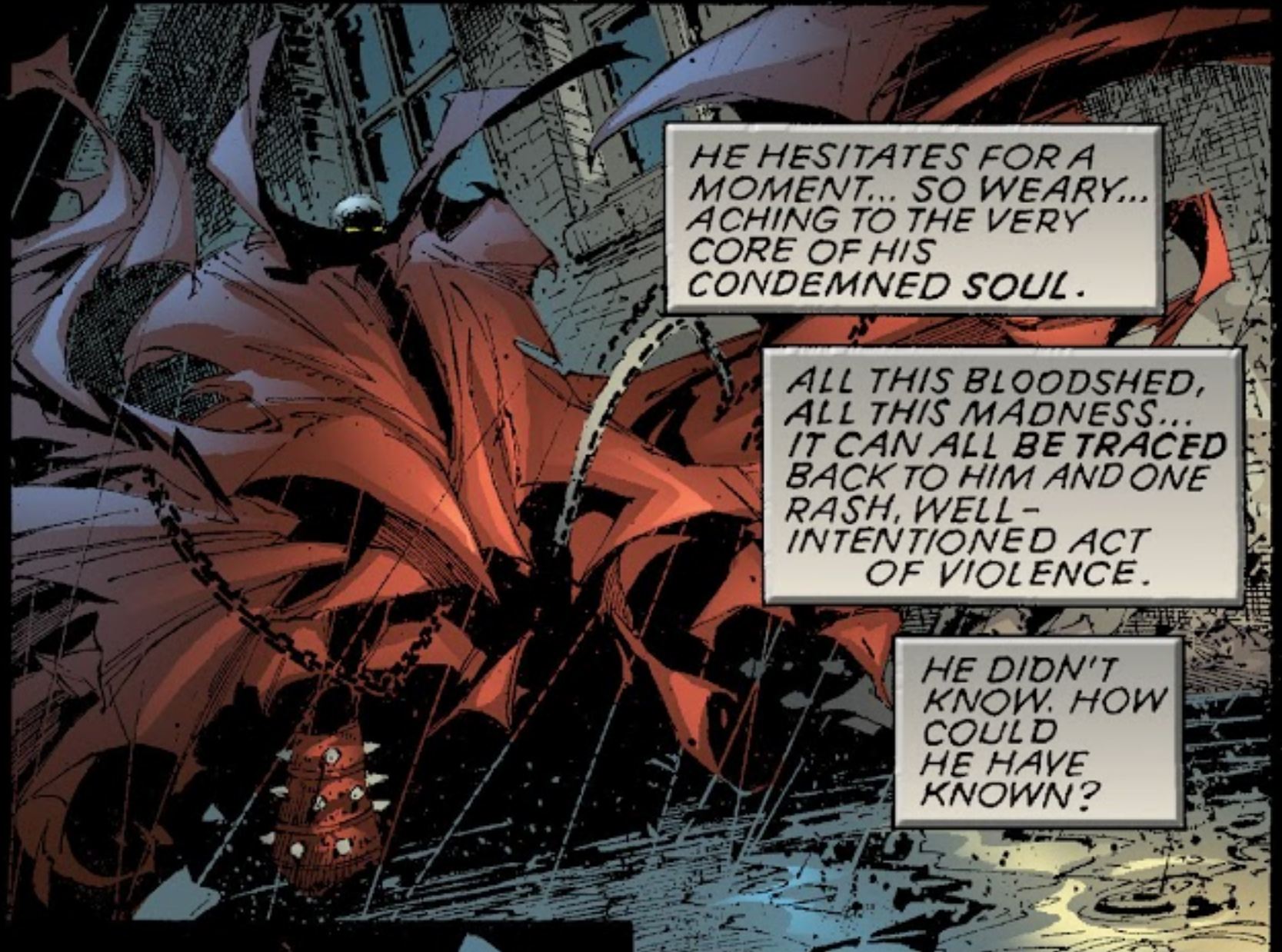
A UNIQUE PATCH OF METAPHYSICAL REAL ESTATE, THE DEAD ZONE IS A LITERAL DOORWAY TO THE REALMS OF HEAVEN.

A PLACE WHERE THE POWERS OF HELL HOLD NO PURCHASE.



RAIN BEATING AGAINST THE DEAD FLESH OF HIS FACE, THE HELL-SPAWN STANDS AT HEAVEN'S PERIMETER.

WHAT DO YOU WANT? TELL ME, YOU BASTARDS!



HE HESITATES FOR A MOMENT... SO WEARY... ACHING TO THE VERY CORE OF HIS CONDEMNED SOUL.

ALL THIS BLOODSHED, ALL THIS MADNESS... IT CAN ALL BE TRACED BACK TO HIM AND ONE RASH, WELL-INTENTIONED ACT OF VIOLENCE.

HE DIDN'T KNOW. HOW COULD HE HAVE KNOWN?



AS HE CROSSES THE THRESHOLD INTO THE DEAD ZONE, HE FEELS HIS POWERS DRAIN FROM HIM...



HIS RAIN-SOAKED CLOAK AND HELL-FORGED CHAINS WEIGH HEAVY ON HIM, BOWING HIS BACK.

I SAID, WHAT DO YOU WANT...



HE IS VULNERABLE HERE.
HELPLESS. AT THE MERCY
OF THE SHINING CITY.
SPAWN DOESN'T CARE. HE
JUST WANTS AN END TO IT ALL.

ALL THE LOSS...
ALL THE SUFFERING...
ALL THE TORTURE...

AND FOR WHAT?
FOR THE SAKE OF
SOME GRAND,
MASTER PLAN THAT
WE WRETCHED
MORTALS WILL
NEVER UNDERSTAND?



SINCE THE
BEGINNING OF
TIME, MAN
HAS RAISED
HIS VOICE TO
THE SKIES AND
BEGGED FOR
DELIVERANCE,
ONLY TO HAVE
HEAVEN TURN
A DEAF EAR.

WHY SHOULD
THIS TIME BE
ANY DIFFERENT?

WHAT
DO YOU
WANT FROM
ME,
DAMN IT?!
IS THIS ALL
JUST A GAME
TO YOU?!

HE CURSES A
HELL THAT
WOULD HARBOR
SUCH EVIL, AND
HE CURSES
A HEAVEN
THAT WOULD
ALLOW IT.



WEAK AND POWERLESS,
HE COLLAPSES UNDER
THE WEIGHT OF HIS OWN
TITANIC GUILT.

SPAWN...



SPAWN,
WE NEED TO
TALK.

THE NEXT MORNING.

>Tch<
LOSER!

DIS-
GRACE-
FUL.

WHU-?!

SSSSS

HEY, BUDDY...
YOU OKAY?
YOU LOOK LIKE
YOU GOT WHACKED
IN THE MELON
PRETTY GOOD.

I SAID,
ARE YOU
OKAY? DON'T
MIND THEM
PEOPLE. MAKES
'EM FEEL GOOD
TO HAVE SOME-
ONE TO LOOK
DOWN ON.

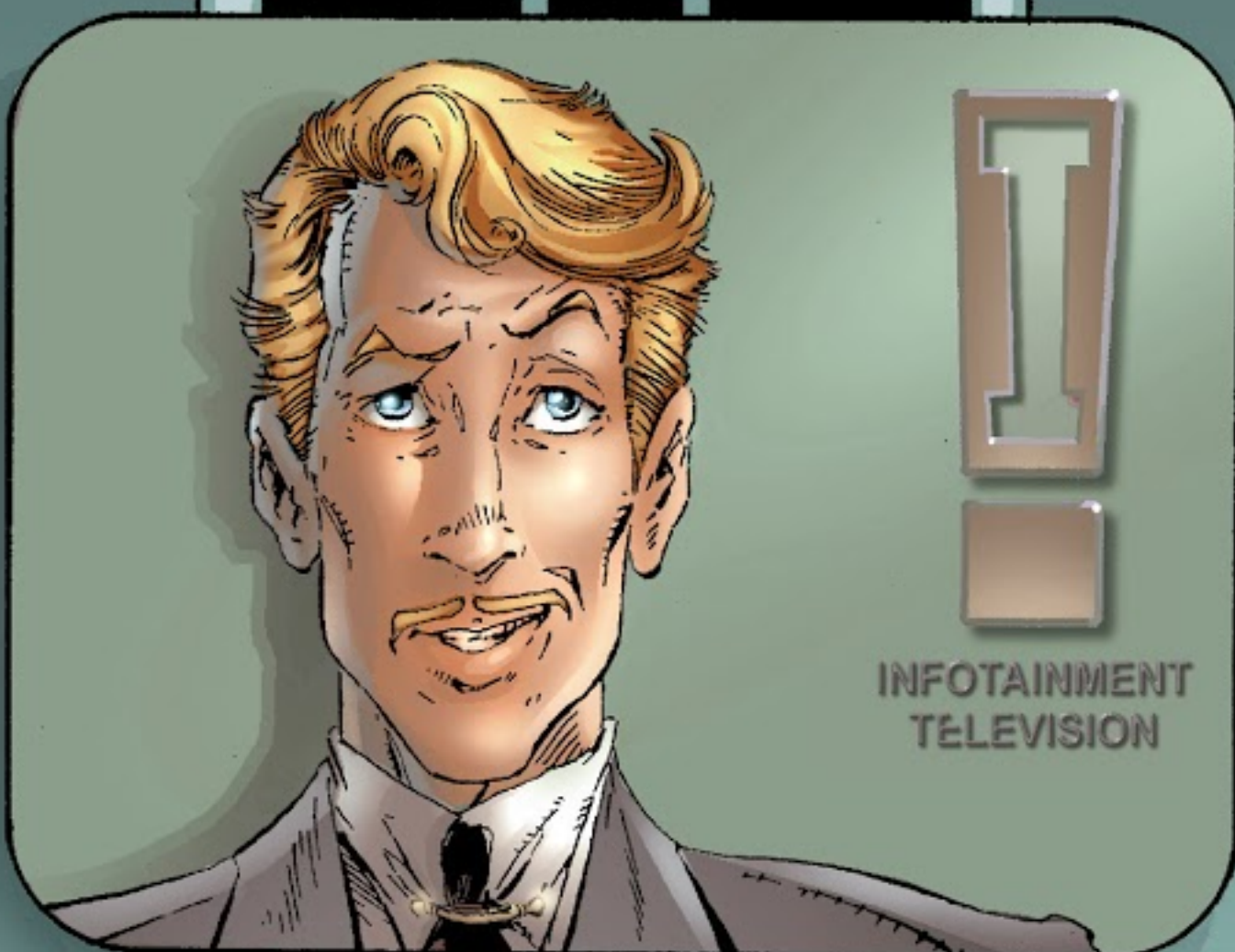
C'MON. LET
ME GET YOU
SOMETHING TO
EAT. 'N YOU LOOK
LIKE YOU COULD
USE A DRINK,
TOO...

BY THE
WAY,
NAME'S
BOBBY.



CNR

... FULL MOON DINER, THE SITE OF LAST NIGHT'S GRISLY SLAYINGS. AT THIS TIME, POLICE OFFER LITTLE INFORMATION ABOUT THE INVESTIGATION. WHAT IS CERTAIN IS THAT A PERSON OR PERSONS UNKNOWN ENTERED THE POPULAR ALL-NIGHT EATERY SHORTLY AFTER 1:00 A.M., AND OPENED FIRE ON THE CROWD BEFORE SETTING THE ESTABLISHMENT ABLAZE. REPORTS CONFIRM MORE THAN ONE DOZEN DEAD IN THE ATTACK. POLICE WILL NOT RELEASE THE NAMES OF ANY OF THE DECEASED UNTIL ALL THE VICTIMS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AND THEIR FAMILIES NOTIFIED.



INFOTAINMENT
TELEVISION

WELL, EVERYONE IN THE *WESTERN HEMISPHERE* SEEMS TO BE GEARING UP FOR THE RELEASE OF THE LATEST CHAPTER IN A CERTAIN *ABSURDLY* POPULAR SERIES OF SCI-FI FILMS. *YOU* KNOW, THE ONE FROM A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY... SO, OF COURSE, THAT MEANS *LOTS* MORE TOYS, VIDEO GAMES, T-SHIRTS AND FAST-FOOD TIE-INS. BUT THAT'S NOT *ALL*. IT'S ALSO GOING TO MEAN *HIGHER TICKET PRICES*. YES, THAT'S RIGHT. TICKET PRICES ARE GOING UP IN MOST MAJOR CITIES, *JUST* IN TIME FOR THE MOTHER OF ALL BLOCKBUSTERS. THAT MEANS A TRIP TO THE CINEMA, PLUS POPCORN AND A COUPLE OF SODAS COULD NOW REQUIRE MANY MOVIEGOERS TO GET A SECOND JOB. SO, *STILL* PLANNING ON SEEING IT TWELVE TIMES?



Channel
X

VIEWER
comment

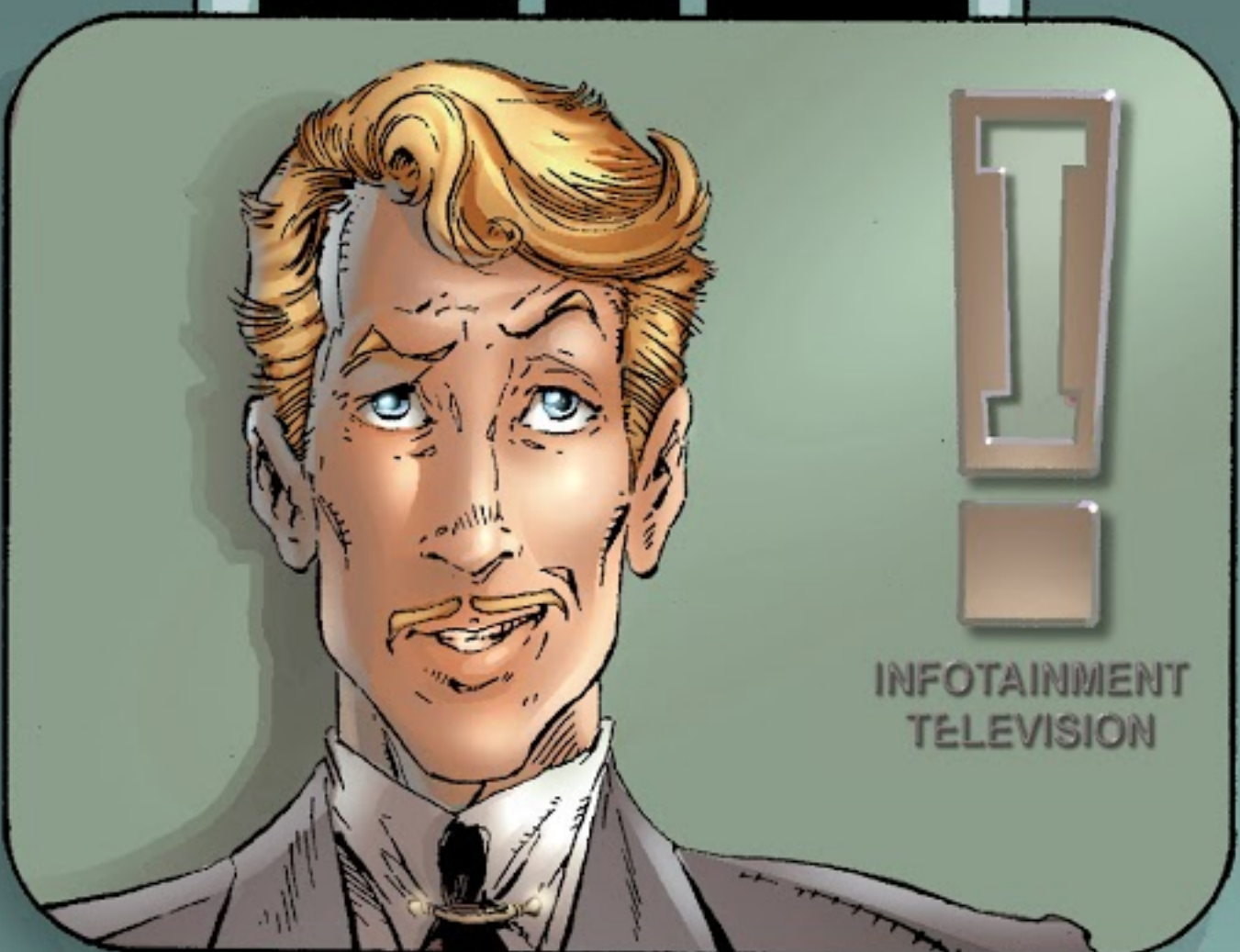
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Channel
X

VIEWER
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SPAWN



Capilla
McFARLANE



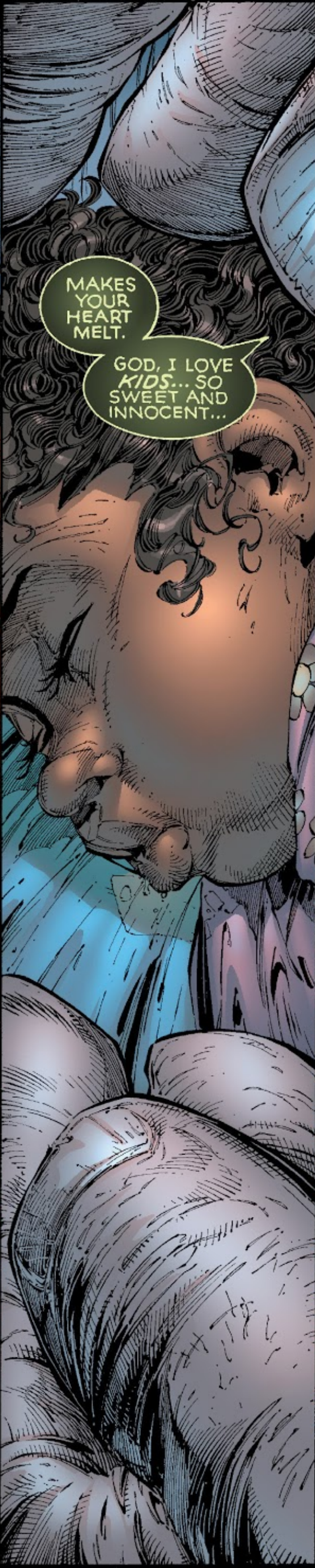
84

DIGITAL
EDITION



LOOK
AT HER...
WHAT A
PERFECT
LITTLE
ANGEL.

THEY'RE
SO *CUTE*
WHEN
THEY'RE
SLEEPING.



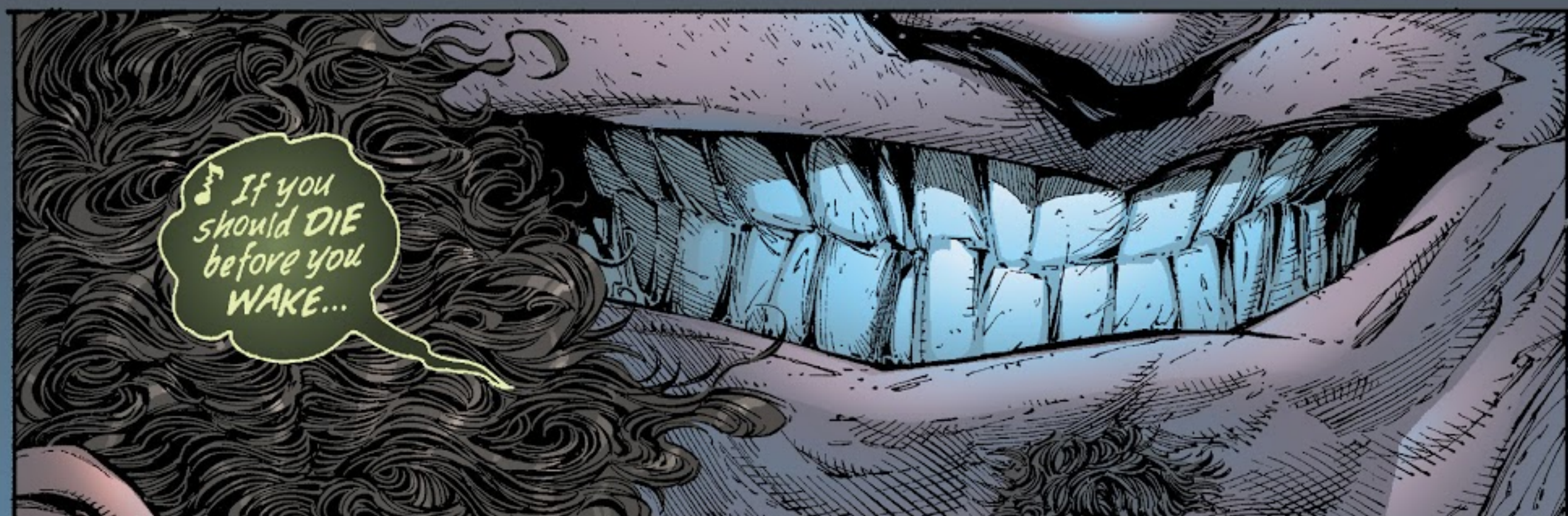
MAKES
YOUR
HEART
MELT.

GOD, I LOVE
KIDS... SO
SWEET AND
INNOCENT...



I COULD
JUST EAT
HER UP
WITH A
SPOON.

COME ON,
HONEY.
COME TO
BILLY...



♪ If you should DIE before you WAKE...



Then BILLY-BOY your SOUL shall TAKE...



COME ON, CYAN. YOU'RE ONE OF US NOW.

WELCOME TO THE CLUB.



"I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF MYSELF AS A LOGICAL MAN. THE ONLY TIME I EVER LET MY HEART RULE MY HEAD WAS WHEN I MET HELEN."

"SHE'S MY WORLD. MY WIFE. THE MOTHER OF MY CHILDREN. SHE'S PUT UP WITH MORE THAN ANYONE HAS A RIGHT TO ASK."

"AND SOMEHOW, I KEEP LETTING HER DOWN."

"BUT THIS IS A DANGEROUS WORLD WE LIVE IN. IT IS FILLED WITH EVIL AND CRUELTY AND VICE. I WANT TO MAKE THE WORLD BETTER. FOR HER. FOR THE KIDS."

"BUT SHE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THAT. NOT TRULY. SHE'S TOO GOOD A PERSON TO BELIEVE ANY WORLD COULD BE AS WICKED AS I KNOW THIS ONE TO BE."

"SO I SNEAK OUT TO THE OFFICE AGAIN. SHE'LL WAKE UP IN A COUPLE OF HOURS AND SEE THAT I'M GONE. SHE WON'T SPEAK TO ME FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS."

"BUT SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT'S AT STAKE. AND SHE WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT IF I TOLD HER."

"TRUTH BE TOLD, I SCARCELY BELIEVE IT MYSELF."

"I'M HUNTING THE GHOST OF A SERIAL MURDERER. A CHILD KILLER NAMED BILLY KINCAID."

"HE'S RETURNED FROM HELL, SWEARING VENGEANCE ON THOSE WHO WRONGED HIM IN LIFE. MY PARTNER SAM BURKE AND I ARE NEAR THE TOP OF THAT LIST."

"HIS M.O. IS TRULY INFERNAL."

"KINCAID IS POSSESSING INNOCENT PEOPLE, COERCING THEM TO PERFORM UNSPEAKABLE CRIMES, AND THEN SENTENCING THEIR POOR SOULS TO HELL."

"HE'S PLAYING CAT AND MOUSE WITH US. HE'S GONE AFTER MY FAMILY ONCE. I WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN AGAIN. I CAN'T."

"I NEVER BELIEVED
IN GHOSTS BEFORE.
NEVER BELIEVED IN
ANYTHING THAT
COULDN'T BE
MEASURED,
TESTED OR
ANALYZED.

"BUT I'VE
LEARNED THE
HARD WAY..."

"SOME THINGS
DEFY LOGICAL
EXPLANATION..."

HOW LONG
ARE YOU
PLANNING ON
STANDING
THERE,
SPAWN?



THE ALLEYS.



SOMETHING FOUL AND MATTED SCURRIES ACROSS JASON WYNN'S FACE, WAKING HIM.

ADRENALINE KICKS IN. HE BOLTS UPRIGHT. EYES FOCUS IN THE DIM LIGHT OF EARLY MORNING. HIS MIND SHARPENS.



AND HE REMEMBERS. THE TRUTH HITS HIM LIKE A TON OF BRICKS. SOMETHING HAS GONE TERRIBLY WRONG IN HIS LIFE.



HEY, MAC! HOW YA FEELING, huh? SLEEP IT OFF OKAY?



I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU WERE LAST NIGHT, BUT IT MUST HAVE BEEN A HELLUVA PARTY.

Huh?

WANT SOME BREAK-FAST?



THE DONUT JOINT UP THE BLOCK TOSSES THE OLD ONES WHENEVER THEY MAKE A NEW BATCH. THEY'RE NOT BAD. TRY 'EM.



GET **AWAY** FROM ME, YOU **CRETIN!** WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

IT'S ALL COMING BACK TO YOU NOW, ISN'T IT, JASON. SOMETHING SNAPPED INSIDE YOU, TOOK OVER YOUR MIND.



IT TRIED TO COMPLETELY ENVELOP YOU. BUT YOU WERE TOO STRONG. YOUR LEGENDARY IRON WILL PROVED TOO MUCH FOR THE PSYCHIC INFILTRATOR.

YOU FOUGHT IT OFF. BUT NOT BEFORE THE DAMAGE WAS DONE.



IT'S A BIT OF A BLUR, ISN'T IT? THERE WAS SCREAMING, YES. AND GUNFIRE. AND BLOOD. YES. OCEANS OF BLOOD.

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU LOOKING AT?



BLOOD THAT STILL CLINGS TO YOU, CRUSTED UP AGAINST YOUR CLOTHES, STAINING YOUR SKIN.

YEAH. THIS IS WYNN. CONNECT ME TO CENTRAL DISPATCH. I NEED A PICK UP. NO TIME TO EXPLAIN...



I'M PATCHING YOU THROUGH TO MISTER STOERMER'S OFFICE, MR. WYNN.

STOERMER? WHAT? I DON'T WANT TO SPEAK TO THAT SANCTIMONIOUS OLD...

GO AHEAD.

HELLO?

HELLO, JASON. HAD A BUSY NIGHT, DID YOU.

SIR, I CAN EXPLAIN.



OF COURSE YOU CAN. WE HAVE EVERY CONFIDENCE IN YOU. BUT THE MAIN THING NOW IS TO GET YOU OFF THE STREETS. GIVE ME YOUR COORDINATES.

LOOK, IT'S... IT'S FINE. I OVER-REACTED. NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. I'LL MAKE MY OWN WAY BACK. I DON'T WANT TO BOTHER ANY--

PLEASE. IT'S NO BOTHER. JUST TELL US WHERE YOU ARE.

Uh... CONEY ISLAND.

HOW FESTIVE WE'LL BE RIGHT THERE.

BASTARD.



DID YOU GET THAT?

YEAH. I THINK SO GIMME A SECOND.



OKAY. THERE. I GOT HIM. ABOUT TWO BLOCKS NORTH OF THE BOWERY.

SPLENDID.

"THE ERSTWHILE Lt. Col. AL SIMMONS, a.k.a. **SPAWN**. FOR SOME REASON, OUR PATHS ARE INTERTWINED IN WAYS I CAN'T BEGIN TO COMPREHEND.

"HE SAVED MY LIFE NOT LONG AGO. BUT THERE'S A CONNECTION THAT RUNS EVEN DEEPER THAN THAT. COME WHAT MAY, WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER."

...SO I TALKED IT OVER WITH COGLIOSTRO, AND THAT'S WHAT WE CAME UP WITH.

ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO GO THROUGH THIS?

DO I HAVE A CHOICE?

I DON'T KNOW. DO YOU? TO BE HONEST, I STILL DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND EXACTLY WHAT YOU *ARE*? ARE YOU FLESH AND BLOOD? SPIRIT? SOMETHING ELSE?

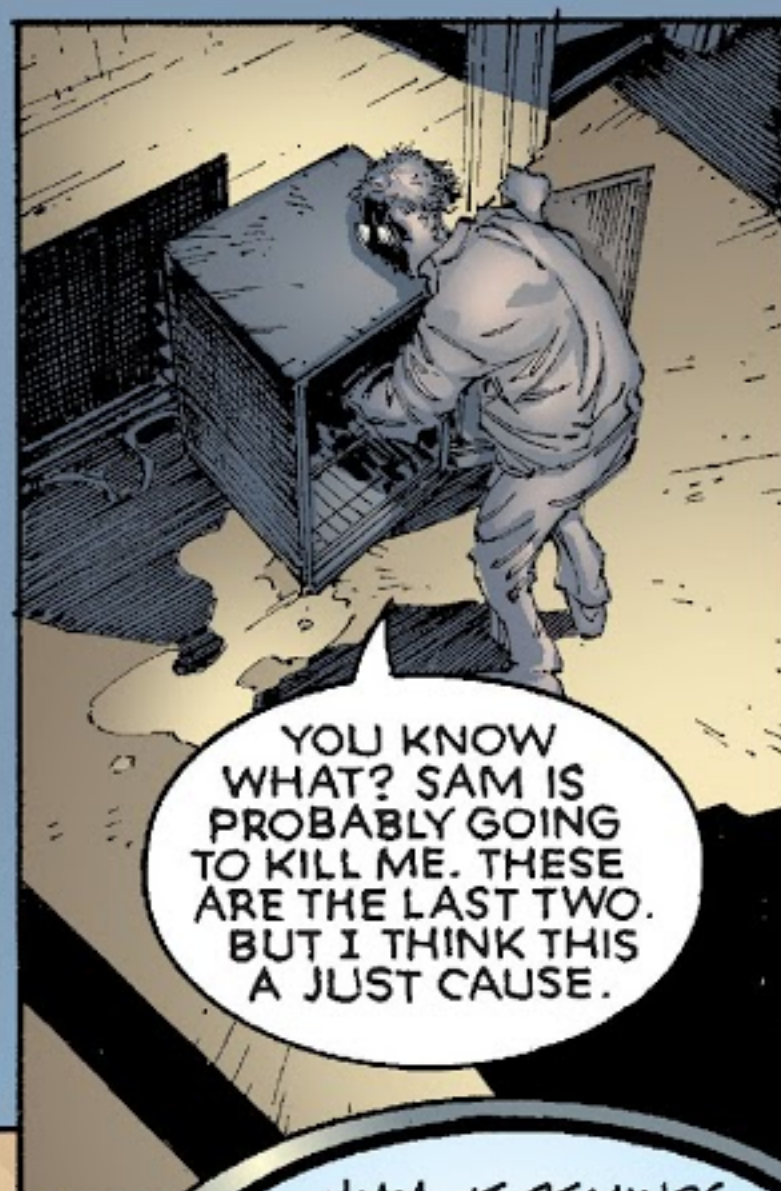
WHAT IS THIS, AN INTERVIEW?

NO, SIR. I'M JUST CURIOUS. DO YOU EAT? DO YOU SLEEP?

I DON'T THINK I NEED TO, BUT SOMETIMES I DO. OUT OF HABIT. LESS SO THESE DAYS.

PERHAPS YOU SHOULD START AGAIN. I'LL FREELY ADMIT THAT EXISTENTIAL PROTOCOLS ARE A BIT BEYOND MY EXPERTISE...

BUT IT'S ALWAYS STRUCK ME THAT IT'S THE *LITTLE THINGS* THAT MAKE US HUMAN.





COME ON,
SILBERT.
WHERE
ARE YA?



YO,
MISTER!
WANNA DEAL?
GEN-U-INE
ROLEX. FIVE
HUNNERD
BUCKS.

GET
OUTTA
HERE, KID.
I'M WAITING
FOR SOME-
ONE.



THREE
HUNNERD...

OKAY.
TWO-
FIFTY...

LEMME
TAKE A
LOOK AT
THAT.



IT'S TICKING.

'COURSE
IT'S TICKING.
AIN'T **BROKE**.
FIRST CLASS.
I TOL' YA.

ROLEXES
DON'T
TICK. THEY
SWEEP.

Huh?

THE
SECOND
HAND ON A
ROLEX SWEEPS,
IN A SMOOTH,
CONTINUOUS
MOTION. THIS
ONE TICKS. SEE--
TICK TICK TICK.
'S A FAKE.

SAYS
YOU. HOW
COME YOU
KNOW
THAT?



JUST
A LITTLE
SOMETHING
I PICKED
UP IN **COP**
SCHOOL.



TRY
AND
CATCH
ME **FAT-
ASS!**

KIDS.
keh keh.



HEYA, SAMMY.

SILBERT. THERE YOU ARE. SO WHAT'S UP? WHY'D YOU ASK TO MEET?

I WANNA KNOW ABOUT THE **MARK**.

YEAH? MARK WHO?

MARK WHO? THE **MARK!** THE WEIRD LITTLE SCAR THINGIE.

WHEN SARAH FROST TOPPED HERSELF, YOU CHECKED HER **NECK**. LIKE YOU KNEW SOMETHING WAS THERE.

M.E.'S OFFICE CONFIRMED THAT ALL THESE WEIRDZOE KILLING PEOPLE HAD THE **EXACT SAME MARK** ON THEIR NECKS. EVERY DAMN ONE.

GODDAMMIT, SAMMY, I MET YOU HERE ON THE SLY OUTTA RESPECT FOR YOU BEING EX-P.D. I WANNA GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO COME CLEAN.

I WANNA KNOW HOW YOU KNEW TO LOOK FOR IT. WHAT DO WE GOT HERE? SOME FUNKED-UP NEW RELIGION?

I DON'T KNOW.

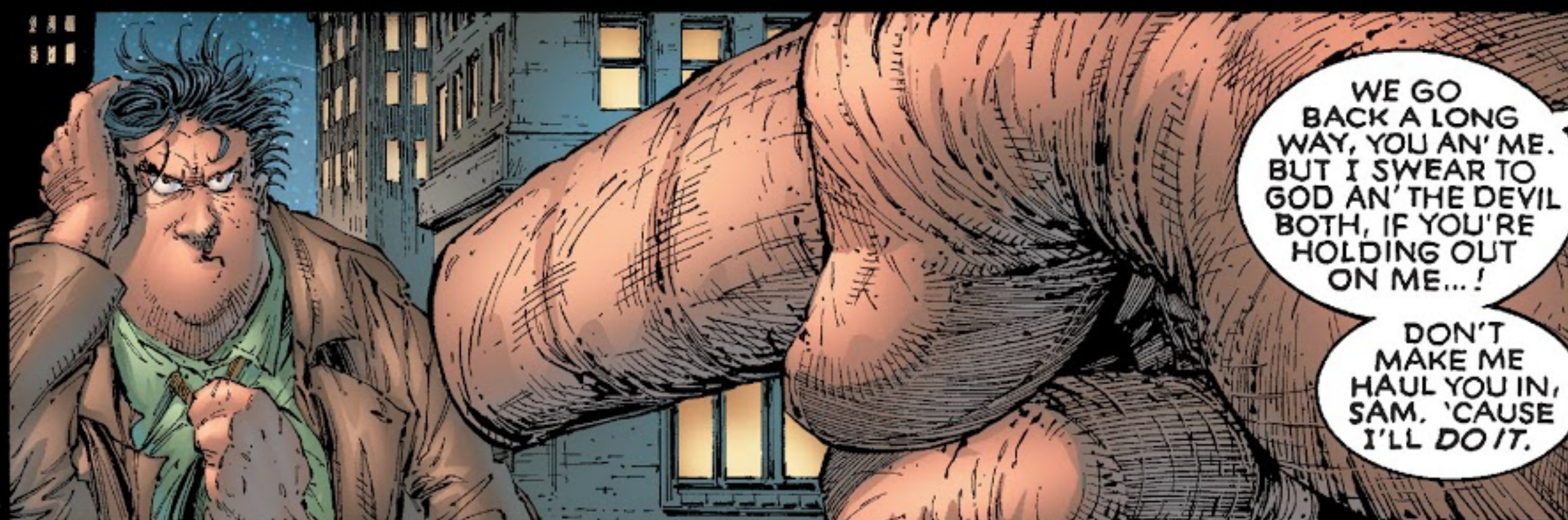


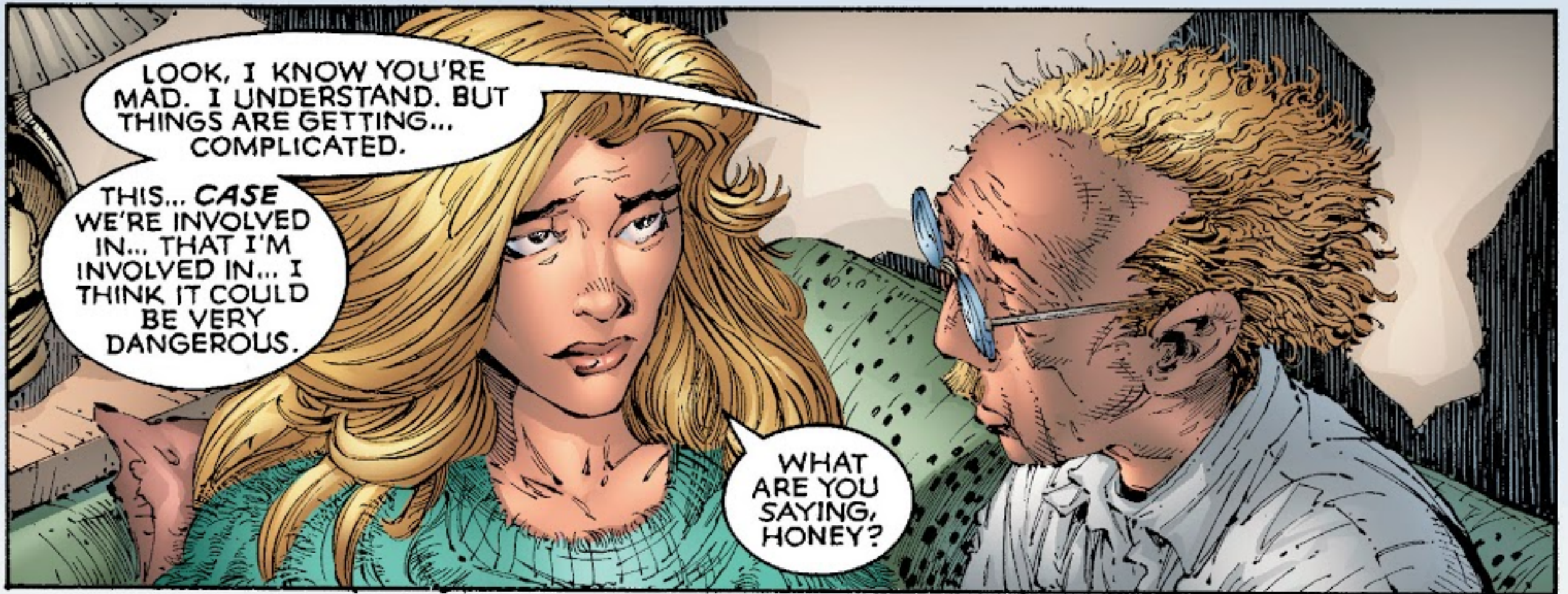
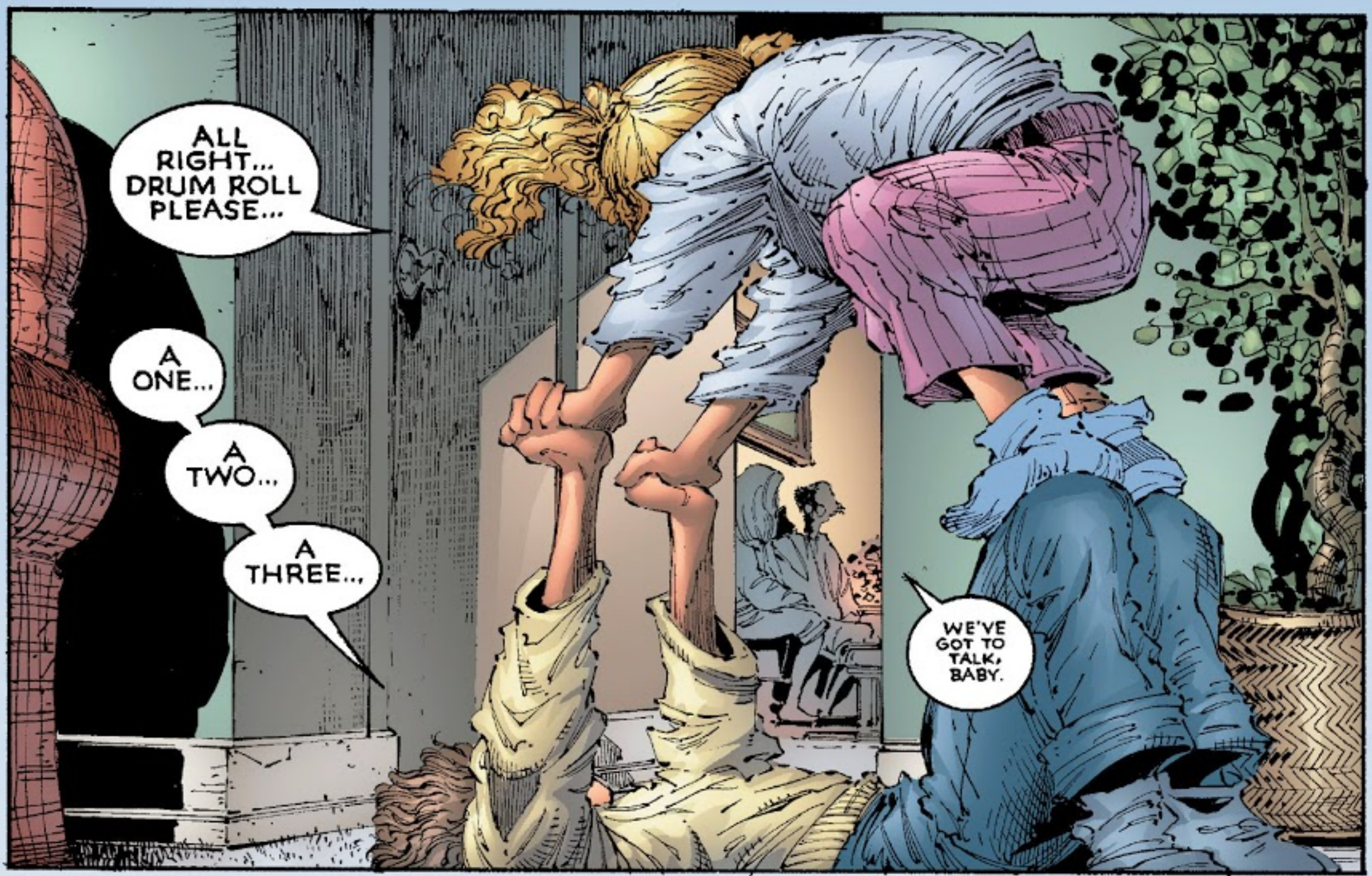
HEY! EASE UP! I DON'T **KNOW** WHAT IT MEANS.

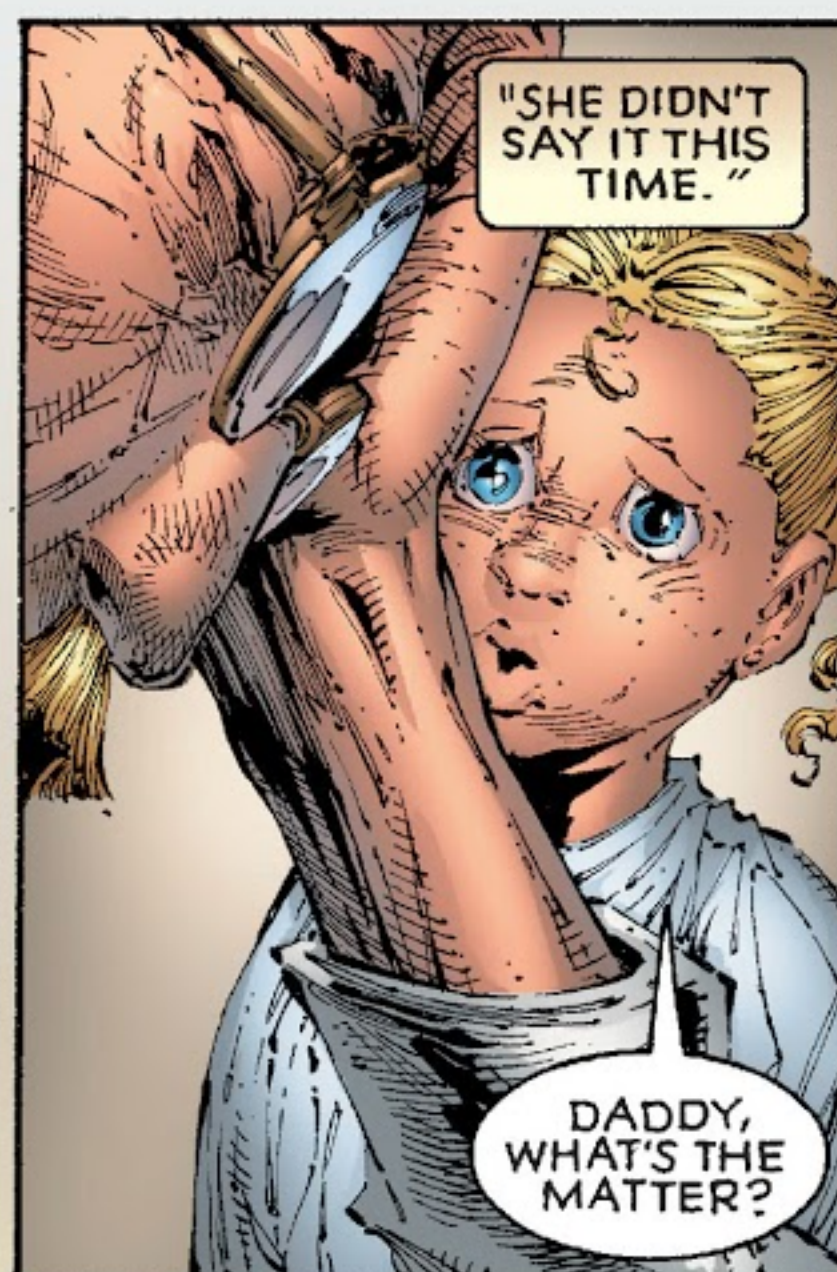
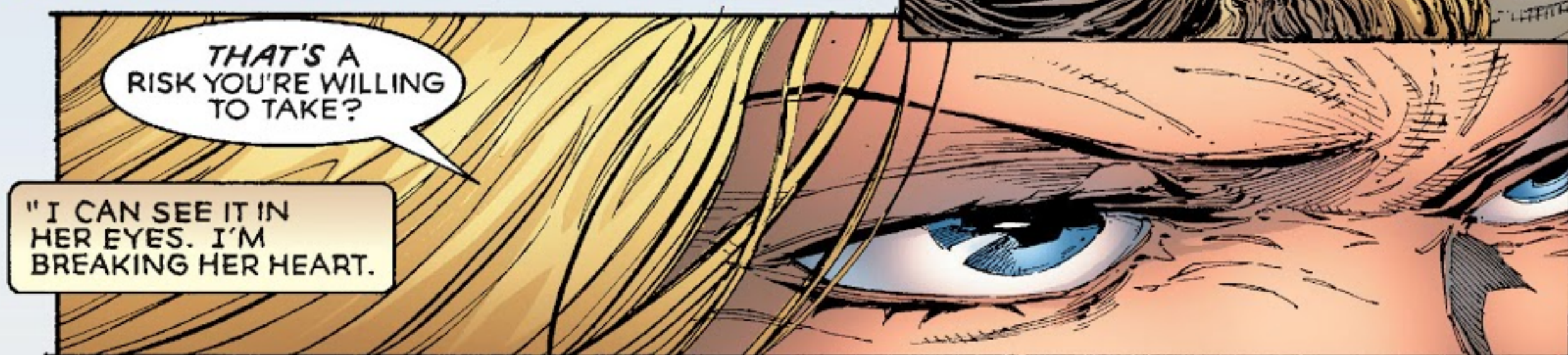
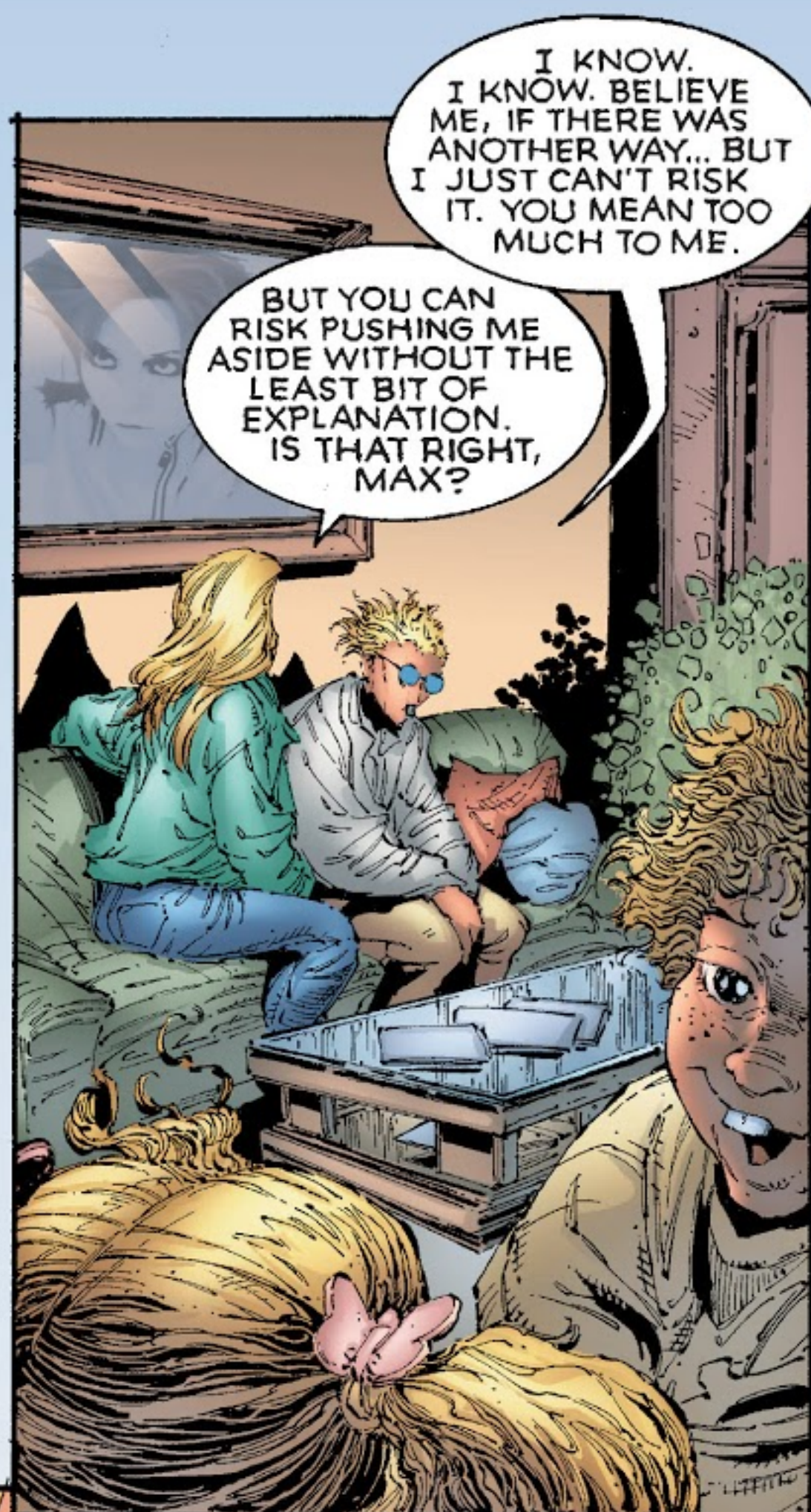
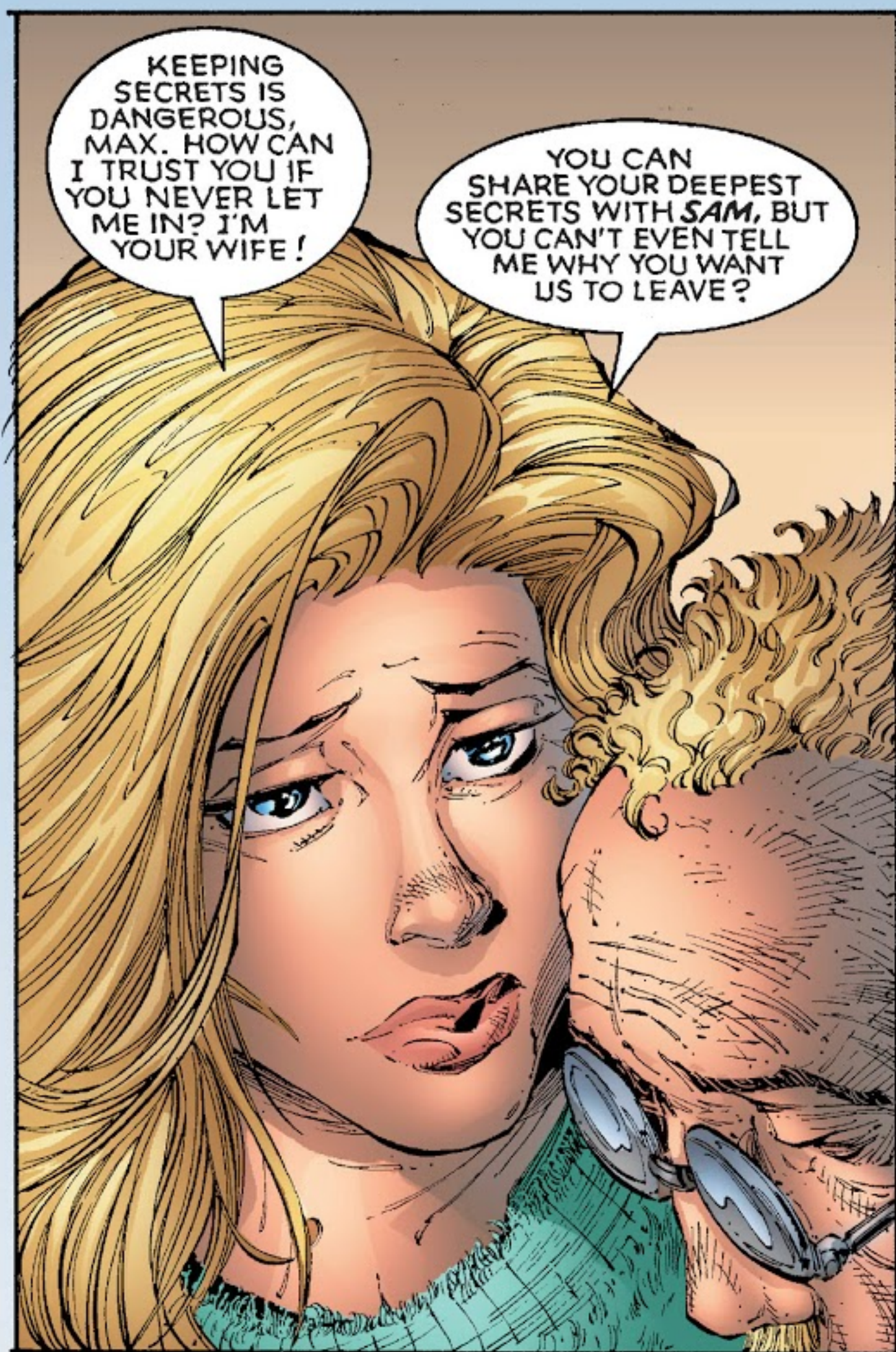


WE GO BACK A LONG WAY, YOU AN' ME. BUT I SWEAR TO GOD AN' THE DEVIL BOTH, IF YOU'RE HOLDING OUT ON ME...!

DON'T MAKE ME HAUL YOU IN, SAM. 'CAUSE I'LL DO IT.







The
FITZGERALD
HOME.

KRASH!

CYAN!
HONEY,
WHAT
WAS
THAT?

TMP!

CYAN?!

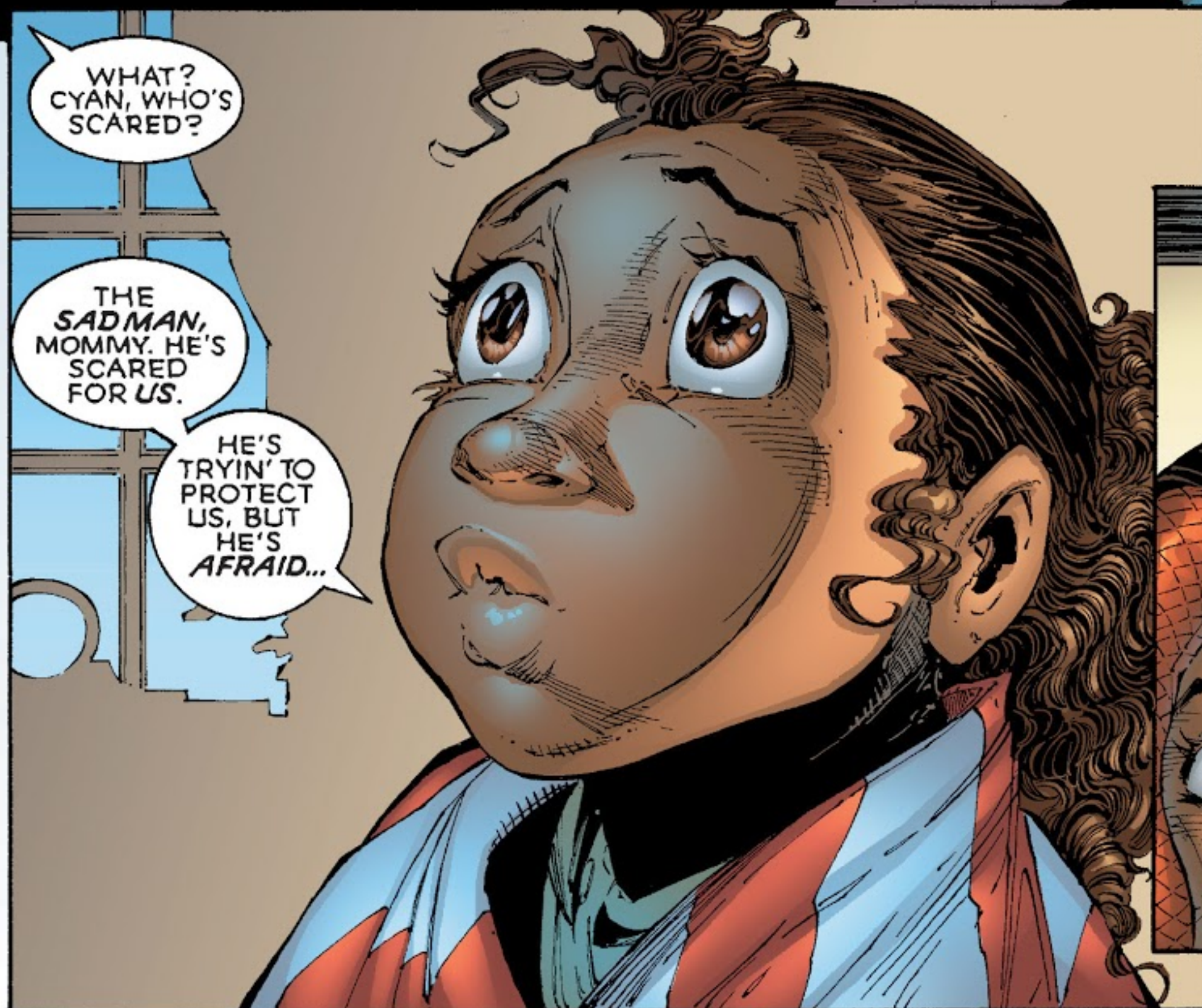
BABY,
ARE YOU
OKAY?



Oh, CYAN,
LOOK AT THIS
MESS. WHAT ARE
YOU DOING IN
MY CLOSET?

OH, GOD.
WHERE DID
YOU FIND THAT
FLAG? PLEASE,
HONEY. THAT'S
VERY **SPECIAL**.
IT BELONGED
TO SOME-
ONE...

HE'S
SCARED,
MOMMY.



WHAT?
CYAN, WHO'S
SCARED?

THE
SAD MAN,
MOMMY. HE'S
SCARED
FOR US.

HE'S
TRYIN' TO
PROTECT
US, BUT
HE'S
AFRAID...



THE
SAD MAN?

"I MET UP WITH SAM LATER THAT NIGHT. I CAN'T SAY WHY WE CHOSE THE **KEYSTONE**. FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE, I SUPPOSE.

"THE KEYSTONE IS A **COP'S BAR**. WE USED TO SPEND A LOT OF TIME HERE IN THE OLD DAYS.

"THINGS WERE SIMPLER THEN. IT WAS EASY TO TELL THE GOOD GUYS FROM THE BAD. THINGS MADE SENSE.

SO WHAT HAPPENED WITH HELEN?

SHE'S ON A PLANE TO FLORIDA WITH THE KIDS. THEY'RE GOING TO STAY WITH HER MOM. SHE'S NOT TOO HAPPY ABOUT IT. I CAN'T SAY THAT I BLAME HER.

I DON'T LIKE KEEPING THINGS FROM HER, BUT I REALLY DON'T SEE WHERE I HAD ANY CHOICE.

KEYSTONE TAVERN

GO HOWARD STERN!

Mick

YEAH... WELL, I'M SURE SHE'LL GET OVER IT. SHE'S A GOOD WOMAN.

"THERE'S NOT MUCH WE CAN DO NOW, EXCEPT WAIT. WAIT FOR KINCAID TO MAKE HIS MOVE. AND PRAY THAT WE'RE ABLE TO PULL THIS OFF.

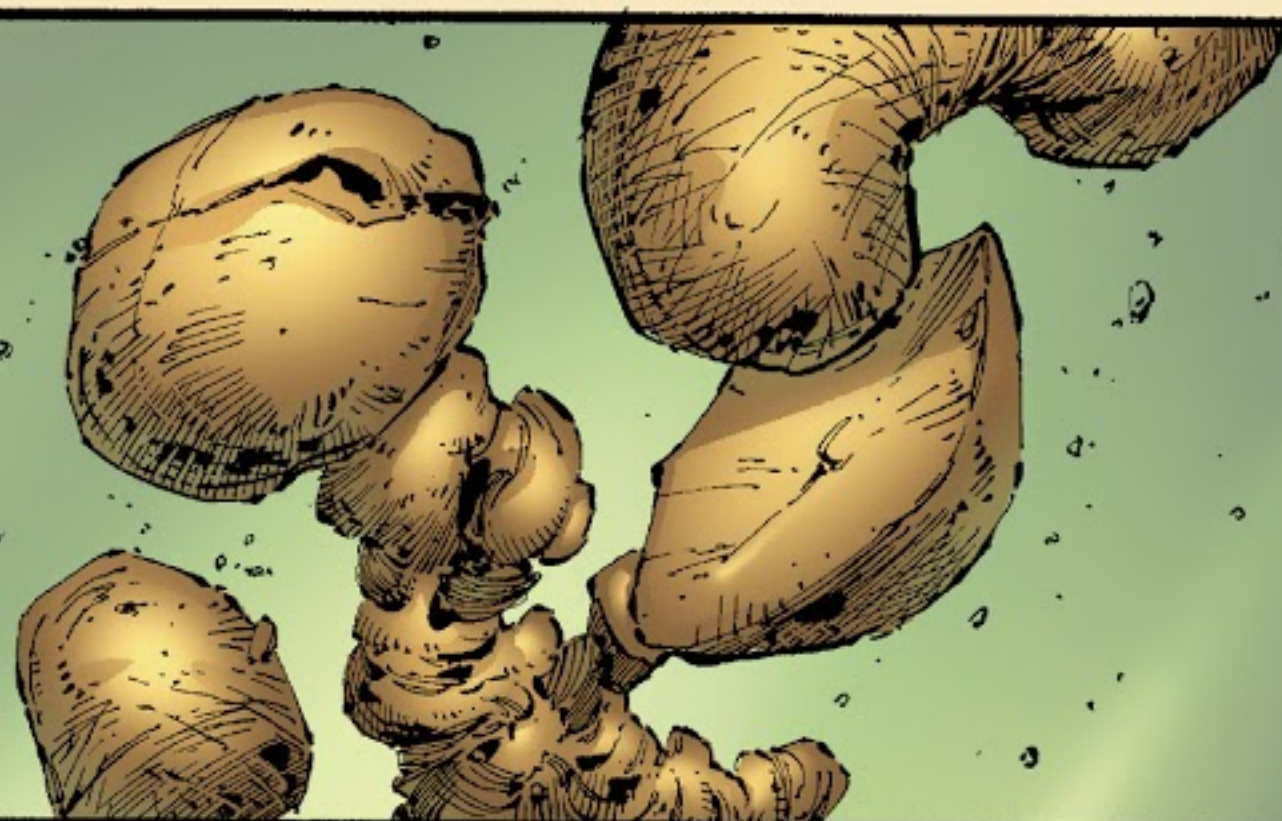
SOME-TIMES I THINK SHE'S BETTER THAN I DESERVE.

"AT TIMES LIKE THIS, I SUPPOSE NO ONE CAN BLAME US IF WE WAX A BIT NOSTALGIC."

... SO THIS
HOT DOG VENDOR,
HE SKIMPS ON THE
RELISH. YEAH, WELL,
I LIKE MY RELISH, SO
SUE ME. SO I SAYS,
"BUDDY, PUT SOME
GODDAMN RELISH
ON THAT DOG."

HE COPS
AN ATTITUDE
AND TELLS ME TO
BEAT IT. SO I PULL
OUT MY SHIELD,
TELL HIM I'M A COP.
SAY I'M PART OF
THE NEW "CONDI-
MENT FRAUD"
DIVISION.

SO, THIS
CLOWN FREAKS
AND STARTS
RUNNING DOWN
THE STREET.



ALL OF A
SUDDEN, I'M
T.J. HOOKER.
CHASING HIM
THROUGH ALLEYS,
KNOCKING OVER
TRASH CANS...

I CATCH
UP WITH HIM'N
PAT HIM DOWN,
RIGHT? TURNS OUT
HE'S GOT A FRIGGIN'
PHARMACY UNDER HIS
COAT. HOT DOG
STAND'S JUST A
FRONT.

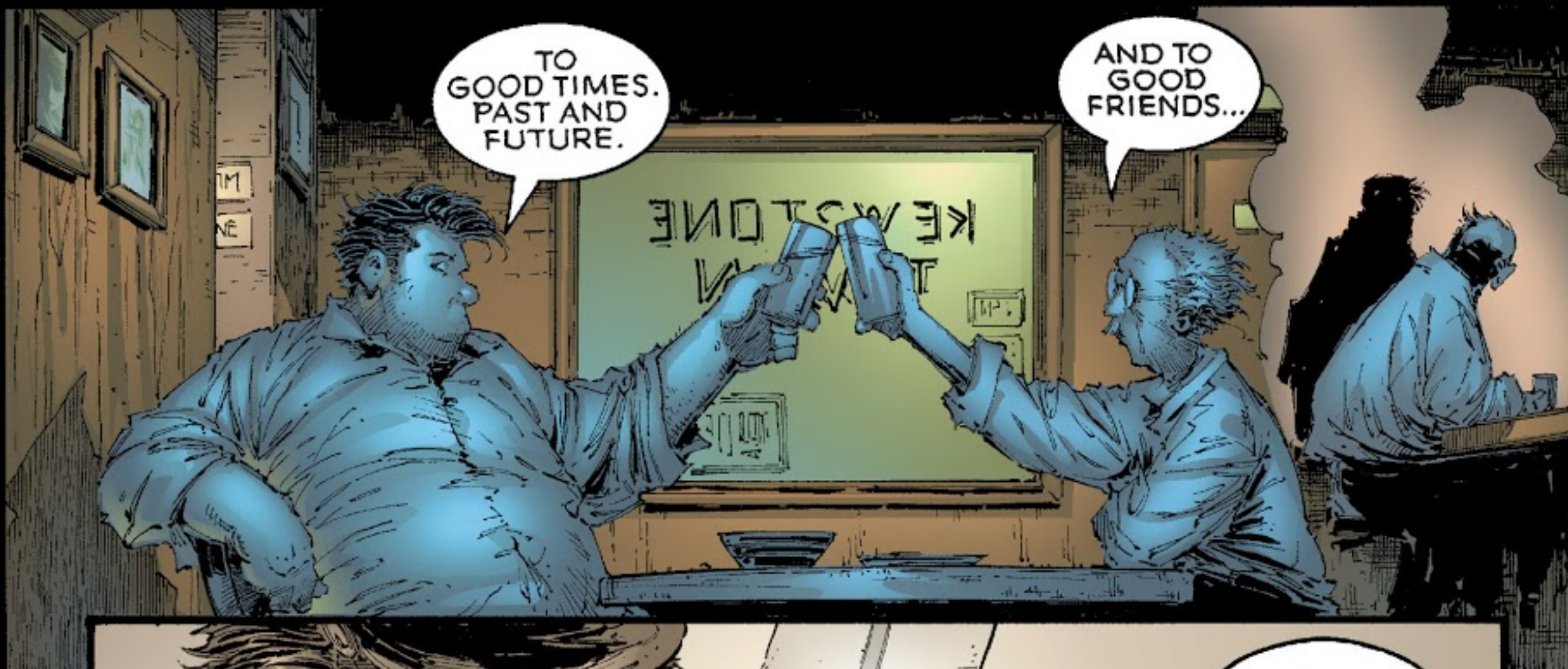
SO THIS
CLOWN ENDS UP
LOOKING AT 10 TO
15 MANDATORY, ALL
BECAUSE HE GOT
STINGY WITH A
LITTLE RELISH.
SOME FOLKS...



MAN,
THOSE WERE
THE DAYS, huh?
CAN YOU
BELIEVE WE WERE
EVER THAT
GREEN?

IT
SEEMS LIKE
A LIFETIME
AGO,
DOESN'T IT,
SIR?







WHAT IS IT?
THAT LAB WORK WE
ASKED FOR?

SAM,
LOOK!

NO...
NO IT'S
NOT.

Things to do
Tomorrow

Wanda Terry

Elizabeth

Mrs. Twitch

Old Blind bitch

Twitch Brats



IT'S
ALMOST
TIME, SPAWN.
ARE YOU
READY?



TO BE
CONTINUED...



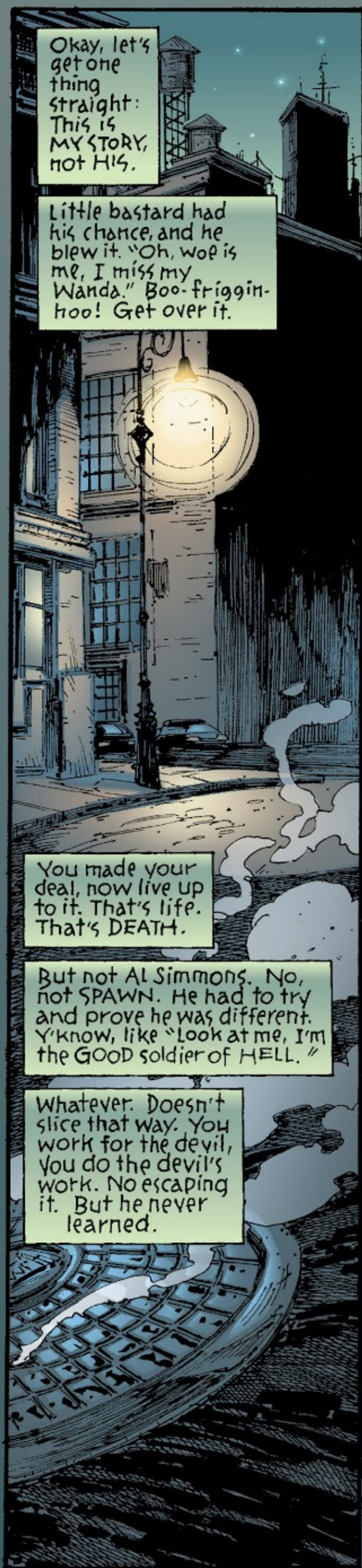
85

DIGITAL
EDITION

DRAWN



Capullo
48
DANNY
SMITH



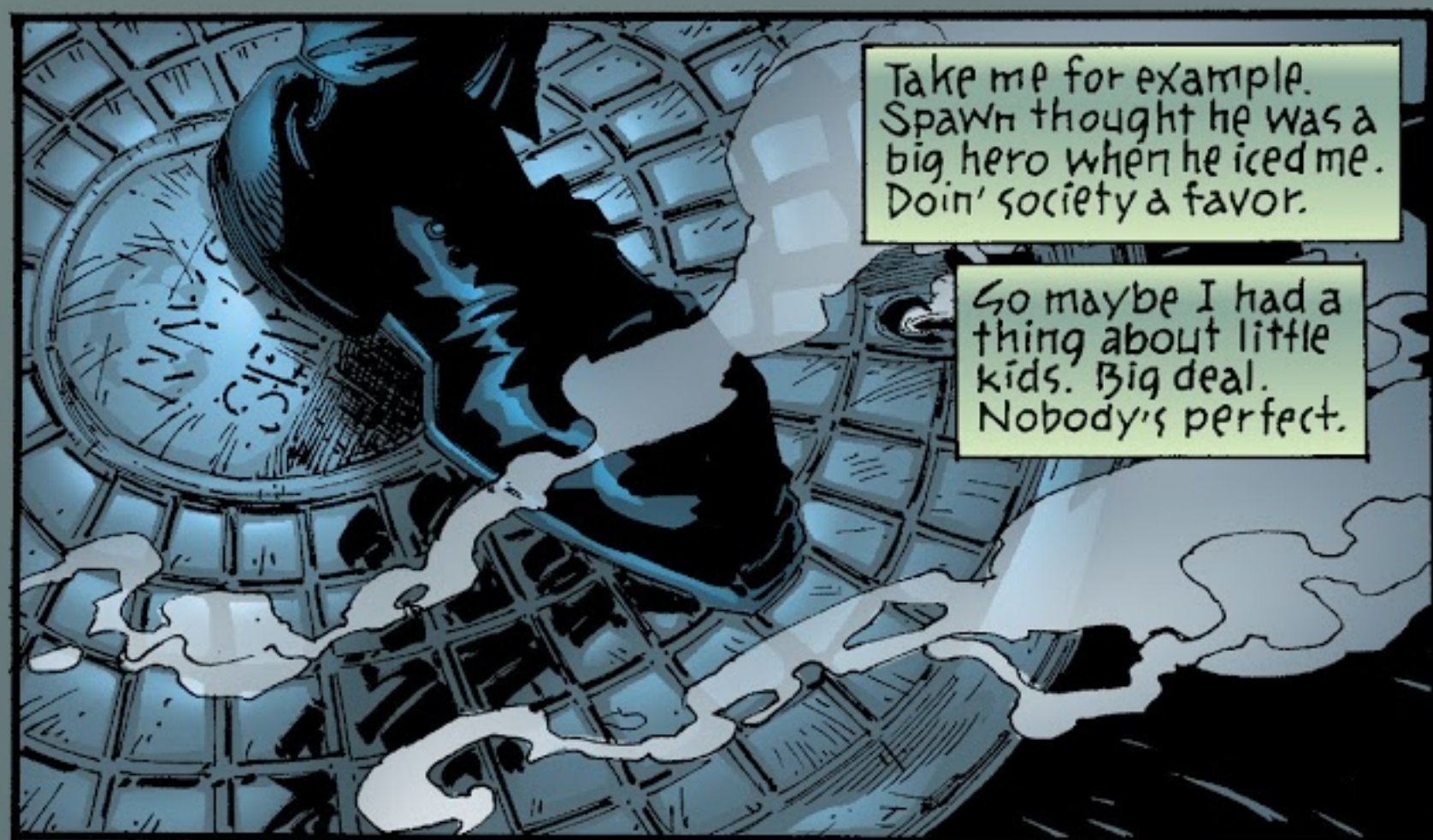
Okay, let's get one thing straight: This is MY STORY, not HIS.

Little bastard had his chance, and he blew it. "Oh, woe is me, I miss my Wanda." Boo-friggin-hoo! Get over it.

You made your deal, now live up to it. That's life. That's DEATH.

But not Al Simmons. No, not SPAWN. He had to try and prove he was different. Y'know, like "Look at me, I'm the GOOD soldier of HELL."

Whatever. Doesn't slice that way. You work for the devil, you do the devil's work. No escaping it. But he never learned.



Take me for example. Spawn thought he was a big hero when he iced me. Doin' society a favor.

So maybe I had a thing about little kids. Big deal. Nobody's perfect.



I still remember the look on his smug, maggotty face... But I'm BACK now. No, you don't get rid of BILLY KINCAID that easily.

And I'm stronger now, too. And best of all, I ain't even in my own BODY, so I can't get hurt.



The one I'm wearing now is a good one. Belongs to a cop named Rafferty. Dumb, naive, optimistic. But it's young and it's strong.

Plus, I always did like a nice UNIFORM. Anyway, old Spawny is about to get some SERIOUS SCHOOLIN'.



Stick around. This is going to get REAL GOOD. I promise you.

Funny thing about
harvesting souls.
Every one of them
TASTES different.
You wouldn't think
so, but it's true.

C'MON,
KIDDIES. IT'S
**KILLING
TIME!**

Some are sweet and
kinda cinnamon-y, others
are kinda tart and piquant.
But everyone's a little
different.

Me, I like the
INNOCENT
ONES best.
Always have.





He's out there right now.

Watching.

I can feel his sick green eyes burning holes in the back of my neck.



He's tensed up like a rattle snake. Waiting for me to make my move, while I wait for him.

Circling each other. A pair of wild dogs, sizing each other up.



He's scared.

He's trying to hide it, but I can smell the FEAR.

So strong you can smell it over the rotting garbage of these alleys. The dark, deep fear of someone who knows that no matter what, they just CAN'T WIN.



That's right, Spawn. You're going to lose, buddy. In the end, you're going to lose EVERYTHING you hold dear.

Mark my words...

THE
FITZGERALD
RESIDENCE.

WAIT,
SLOW DOWN.
WHAT IS
THIS ALL
ABOUT?

I'M AFRAID
THERE'S NO TIME
FOR EXPLANATIONS.
WE HAVE REASON TO
BELIEVE THAT YOU
AND YOUR FAMILY
ARE IN GRAVE
DANGER.

LET'S
JUST
LEAVE IT
AT THAT.

NO, I
WON'T
"JUST
LEAVE IT
AT THAT."

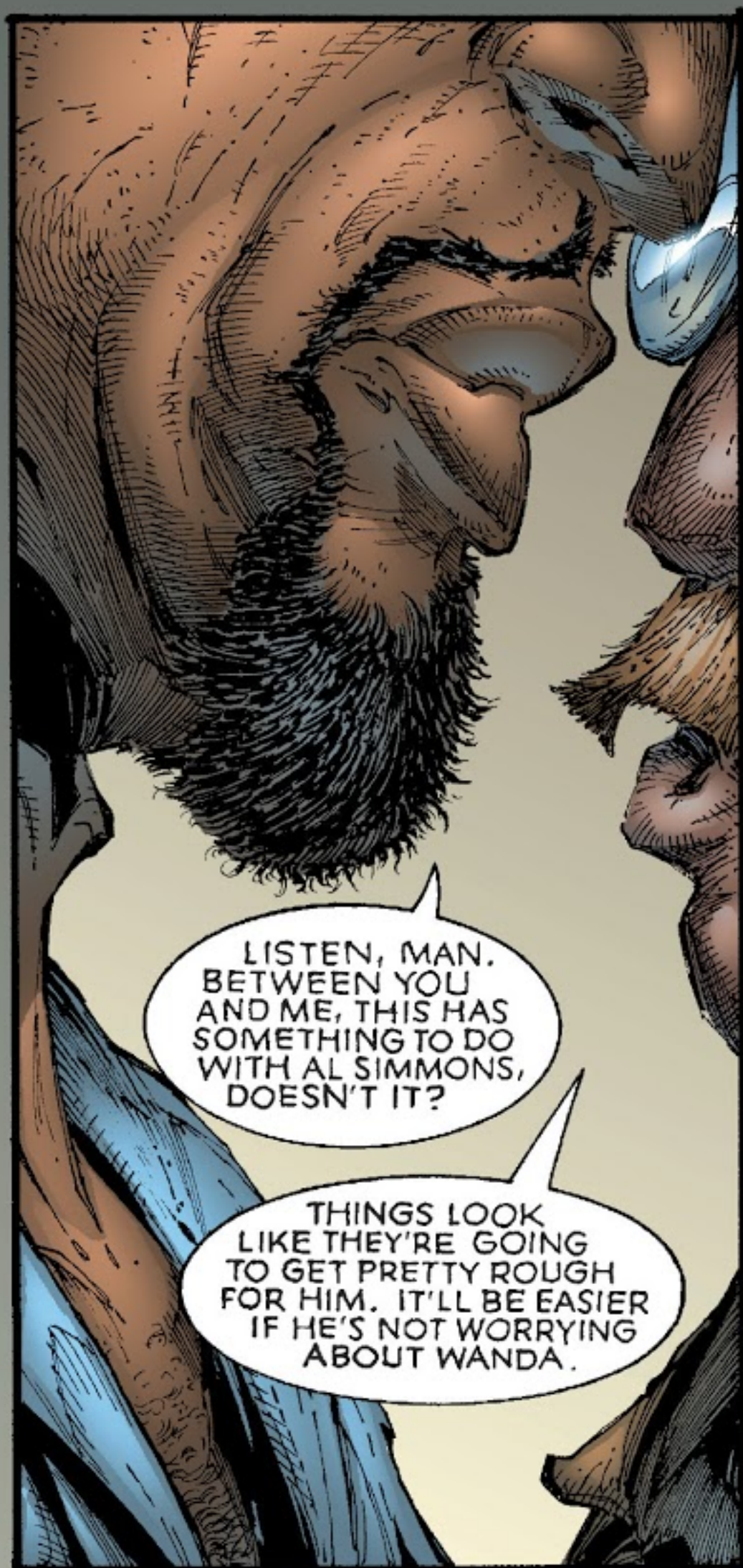
TERRY, PLEASE. I
ASSURE YOU WE HAVE
OUR REASONS. I SENT
MY OWN FAMILY AWAY
JUST A FEW HOURS
AGO.

C'MON,
LADY. WE
JUST DON'T WANT
TO TAKE ANY
CHANCES.

IF WE'RE
WRONG, I'LL
BE HAPPY TO
BUY YOUR
WHOLE FAMILY A
BIG BREAKFAST
AND WE CAN
ALL HAVE A
HUGE LAUGH,
OKAY?

YOU CAN'T
JUST COME BANG
ON OUR DOOR IN
THE MIDDLE OF THE
NIGHT AND TELL US
WE HAVE TO LEAVE,
ALL BECAUSE OF
SOME VAGUE AND
UNSPECIFIED
THREAT.

I'M NOT
GOING ANY-
WHERE TILL I
KNOW WHAT THIS
IS ALL ABOUT. I
MEAN, JEEZ,
YOU'RE NOT
EVEN **REAL**
COPS!



LISTEN, MAN.
BETWEEN YOU
AND ME, THIS HAS
SOMETHING TO DO
WITH AL SIMMONS,
DOESN'T IT?

THINGS LOOK
LIKE THEY'RE GOING
TO GET PRETTY ROUGH
FOR HIM. IT'LL BE EASIER
IF HE'S NOT WORRYING
ABOUT WANDA.



HONEY,
I THINK
MAYBE WE
BETTER GO.
JUST TO BE
ON THE SAFE
SIDE.

C'MON,
LET'S GO
GET THE
KID.

Sigh.
FINE. BUT
I'M NOT HAPPY
ABOUT THIS.

CYAN, BABY.
WAKE UP. WE'RE
GONNA TAKE A
LITTLE TRIP,
OKAY?



HONEY?



CYAN,
WHAT'S
WRONG?

I'M COLD,
MOMMY.
WHY'S IT SO
COLD?

All right, then. Enough
dickin' around. Let's say
we cut to the chase.

HE'S
COMING.

Yoo-Hoo!
SPA-AWWN!
WON'T YOU COME
OUT AND
PLAY?

LOVELY
DIGS YOU GOT
HERE, BY THE
WAY. HOW 'BOUT
GIVIN' ME THE
NICKEL
TOUR?

STAY
HERE. LET
HIM COME
TO YOU.

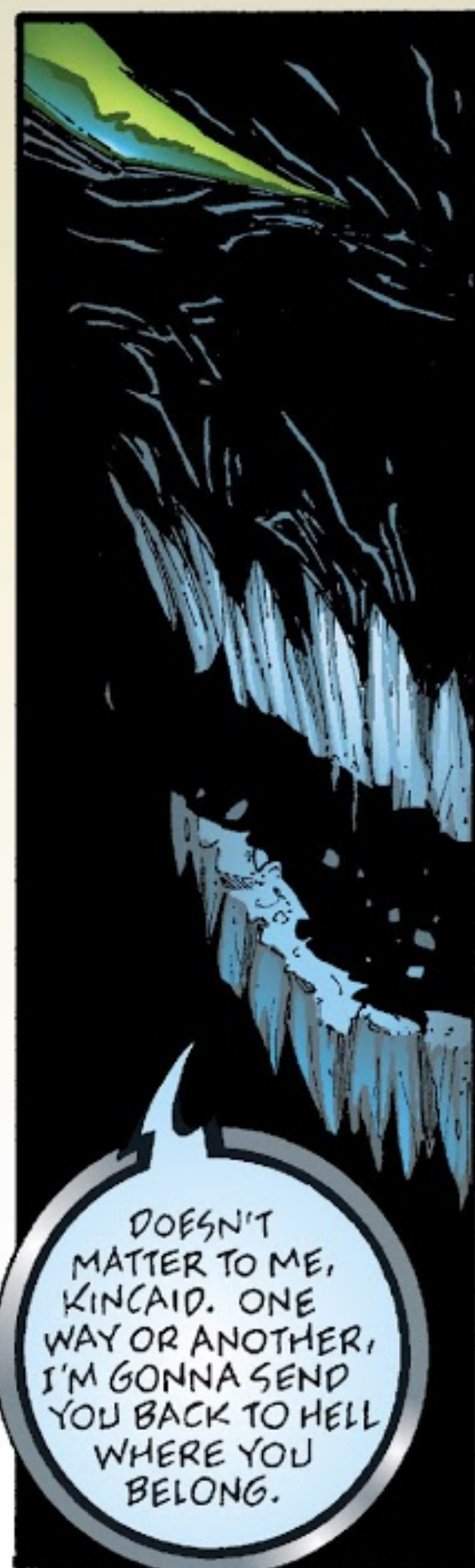
Nothing.
Figured
as much.

Guess he's going
to need a little
convincing.

SPAWN! NO!
YOU'RE PLAYING
RIGHT INTO HIS
HANDS!

KINCAID!

**BAM
BAM
BAM**





"YOU'RE NOT EVEN REAL COPS." WHO DOES SHE THINK SHE IS? JEEZ, ALL I'M TRY'N TO DO IS SAVE HER LIFE.

I DIDN'T THINK SHE EVER WAS GONNA SEE REASON. WOMEN.

I DON'T LIKE THIS, SIR.

WHAT'S THAT?

OFFICER RAFFERTY. HE'S THIRD GENERATION P.D. ... GREEN ... LESS THAN A YEAR ON THE FORCE.

HE AND HIS WIFE JUST HAD THEIR FIRST CHILD. SIR, HE HAS A SON.

SO WHAT'S YOUR POINT?



THIS RAFFERTY IS A **GOOD MAN**. I DON'T FEEL RIGHT ABOUT THIS AT ALL.



HE'S A GOOD MAN WITH A SOUL-STEALING, REVENGE-SEEKING **GHOST** OF A **CHILD KILLER** INSIDE HIM. IT'S NOT LIKE WE GOTTA LOT OF OPTIONS.

I MEAN, I'M NOT THRILLED ABOUT THIS NEITHER. BUT WE JUST GOTTA TRUST THAT SPAWN AND THE OLD MAN KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING.



IN ANY CASE, IF WE DON'T GET TO THE ALLEYS PRONTO, THE WHOLE ISSUE'S GONNA BE PRETTY **MUTE**.

HANG ON!



MOOT.

WHAT?

MOOT, SIR. NOT "MUTE." MOOT.

Huh?

NEVERMIND, SIR.



WHERE
ARE YA,
SPAWN?

DO I
HAFTA POP
A FEW MORE
OF YOUR
PALS TO
GET YOUR
ATTEN-
TION?



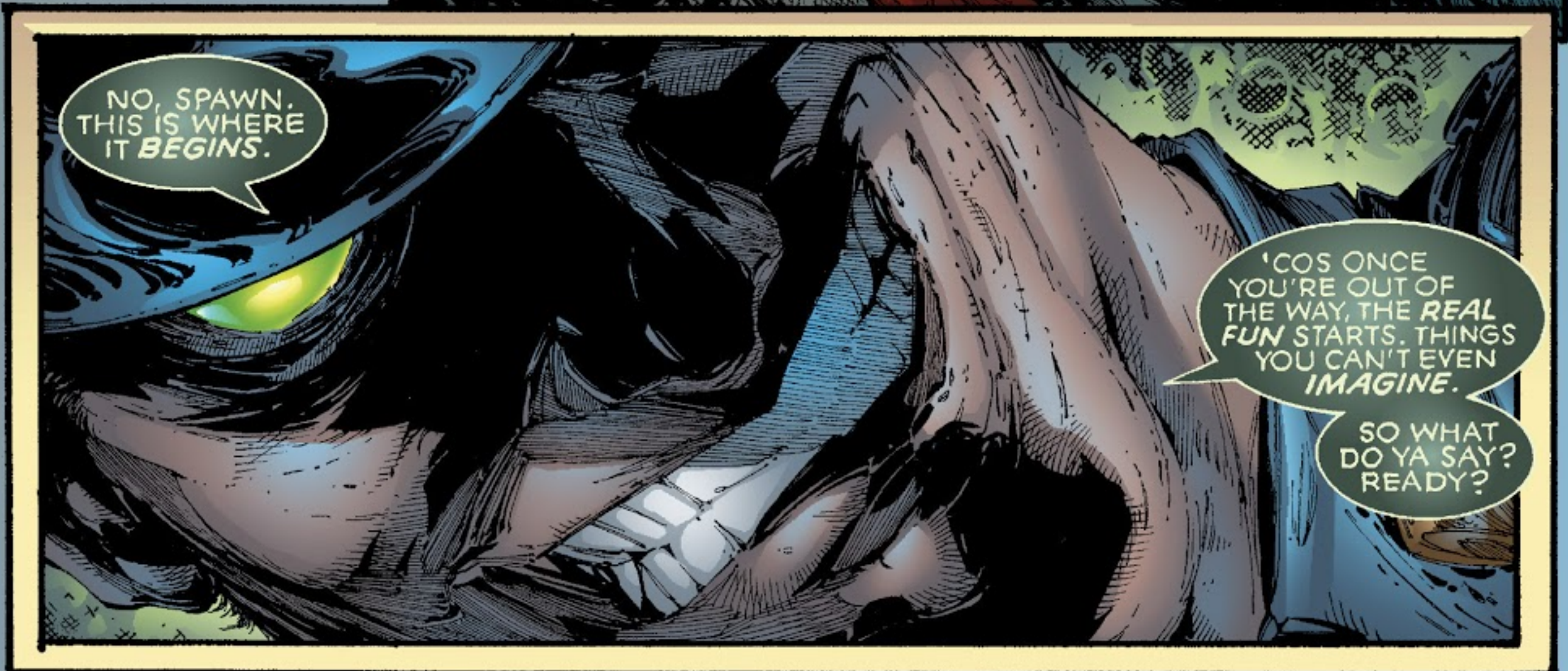
DON'T GET ME
WRONG. I WOULDN'T
MIND. I MEAN, I'VE
GOT THE WHOLE
NIGHT TO KILL...

SPAWN?



HERE.

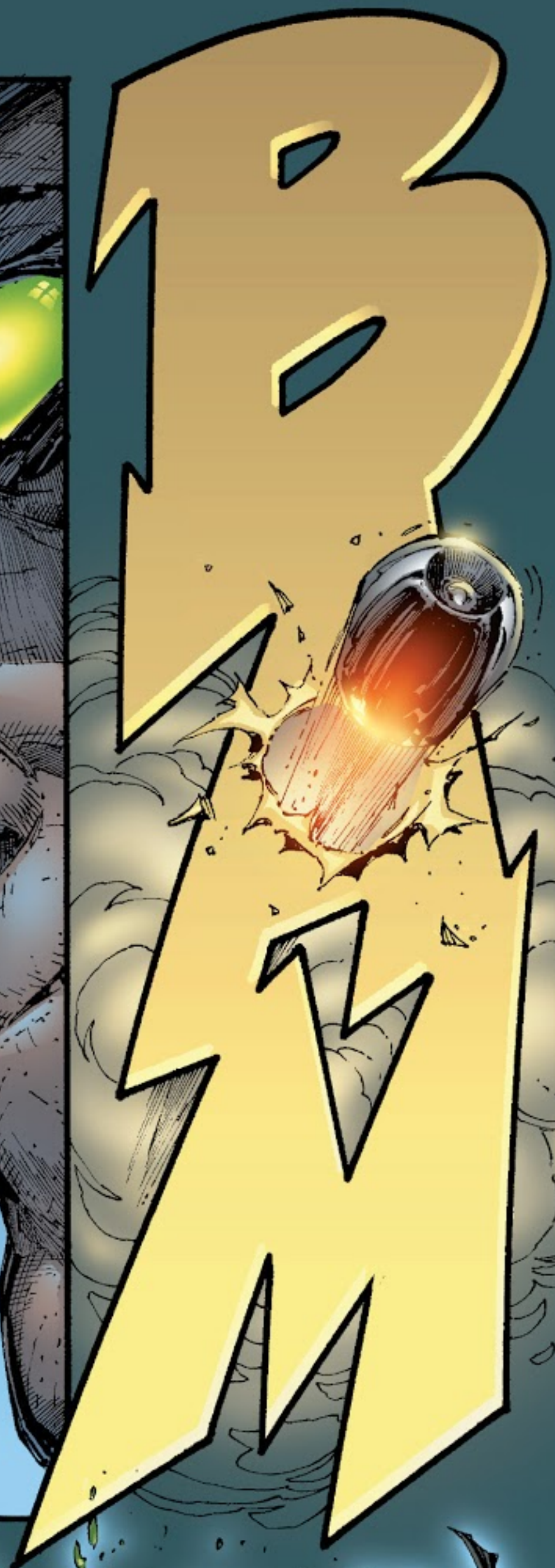
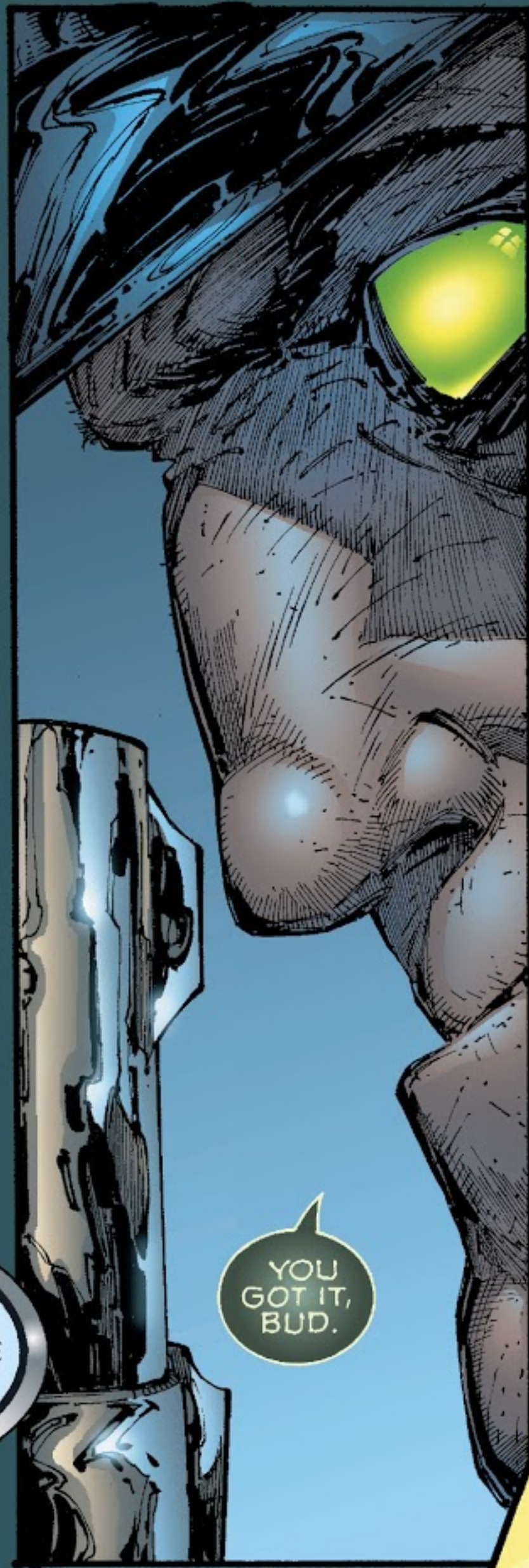
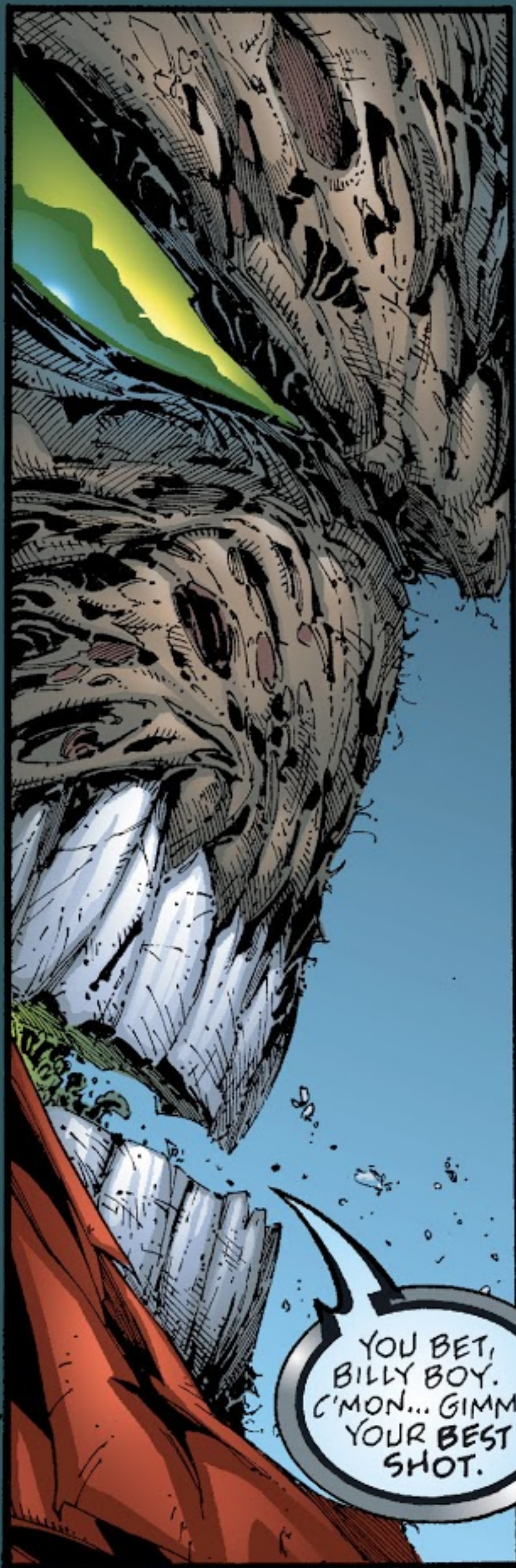
THIS
IS WHERE
IT ENDS,
KINCAID.



NO, SPAWN.
THIS IS WHERE
IT *BEGINS*.

'COS ONCE
YOU'RE OUT OF
THE WAY, THE *REAL*
FUN STARTS. THINGS
YOU CAN'T EVEN
IMAGINE.

SO WHAT
DO YA SAY?
READY?





HELL, MAN!
LOOKIT YOU!
YOU'RE BLEEDING!
WHAT'S THAT
ABOUT, huh,
SPAWNY? USED UP
ALL YOUR POWER
CHIPS, DIDJA?

DON'T
WORRY. I'LL
MAKE THIS
QUICK AND
BE ON MY
WAY.

YOU'RE
NOT GOING
ANYWHERE.

WELCOME
TO THE DEAD
ZONE, BILLY.
THIS PART OF THE
ALLEYS BORDERS
DIRECTLY ON
HEAVEN...

NONE
OF HELL'S
CHILDREN
HAVE ANY
POWER
HERE.

YA GET IT,
BILLY? YOU'RE
NOW STUCK INSIDE
THAT BODY. AND
BELIEVE ME WHEN I
TELL YOU, YOU'RE
NOT GETTING
OUT ALIVE.

THIS IS
WHERE IT ENDS,
BILLY. YOU AND ME.
MAN TO MAN.

UFF!

KEEP THE
CIRCLE TIGHT,
BOYS. WHATEVER
YOU DO, DON'T LET
THEM GET OUT.

AND
DON'T LET
BILLY
TOUCH
YOU.



Damn, he's strong, I'll
give him that. Even
wounded, with no
powers, he still has
Simmons' training
and combat skill.

WHAT'S
THE MATTER,
KINCAID. NOT
USED TO FIGHTING
YOUR OWN
BATTLES?

But this BODY is pretty strong
too, and even younger. And best
of all, it ain't MINE. So I ain't
much worried about damaging it.





Okay, I admit, things are looking pretty bad for me. And listen to those a-holes cheering him on.

Hell, I bet YOU'RE cheering for him, too.

Yeah, well screw you.



I ain't gonna go down like this. No sir. Not by a long shot.

HHHNGCH.



WHAT'S GOING ON?

WHY'S THAT GUY SHAKING?

WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?

HIS EYES, MAN. LOOKIT HIS EYES!

HUH?!

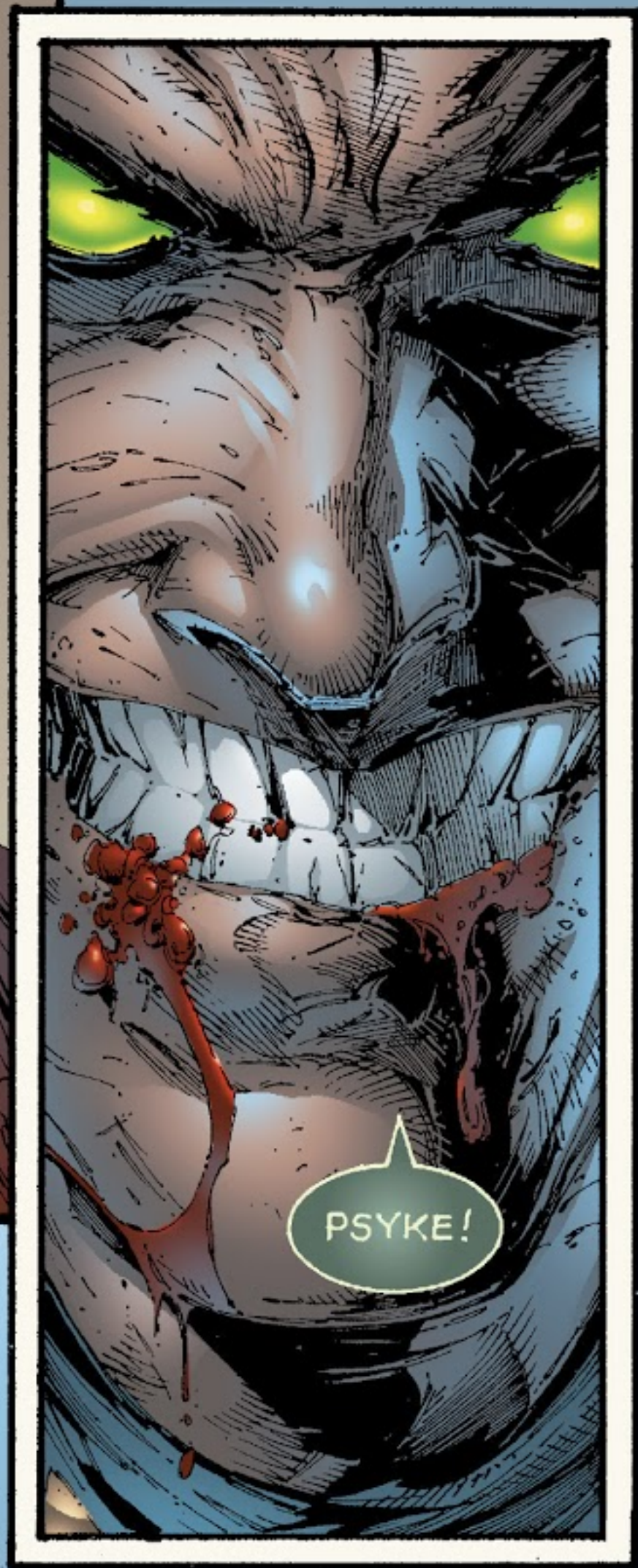
WHAT THE HELL?! WHERE AM I? OH JESUS CHRIST JESUS CHRIST... WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE...?

...RAFFERTY?

WHAT--?



I told you before.
This is MY STORY,
not HIS.



PSYKE!



WHAT AM I,
AN IDIOT? YOU
THINK I DON'T KNOW
ABOUT THE **DEAD**
ZONE. I SWEAR,
SIMMONS...

... THE THING
I HATE MOST
ABOUT YOU ('SIDE FROM
THAT TIME YOU JAMMED AN ICE
CREAM SCOOPER IN MY SPLEEN)
IS YOU'RE SO
GODDAMN
UNORIGINAL!!

YOU
ACTUALLY
THINK YOU
HAVE *FREE*
WILL?!

DUNGH!

YOU THINK
YOU *MATTER*?
HUH? YOU'RE A
JOKE. THERE
WAS ONLY EVER
ONE WAY THIS
COULD END. YOU
NEVER HAD ANY
CHOICE.

YOU
HAVEN'T DONE
ONE THING SINCE
YOU'VE BEEN BACK
THAT WASN'T
EXACTLY WHAT
HELL WANTED
YOU TO *DO*!

YOU THINK
I'D EVEN *BE* HERE
NOW, CLAIMING ALL
THESE SOULS, IF YOU
HADN'T *KILLED ME*
IN THE FIRST
PLACE.

AIN'T GONNA
STOP THERE,
NEITHER. FIRST
I'M GONNA TAKE
DOWN THOSE TWO
IDIOT EX-COPS. PLUS
THE SKINNY ONE'S
WIFE. AND HIS
KIDS. DON'T
WORRY, I *WILL*
FIND THEM.

AND THEN ALL
YOUR ALLEY RAT
FRIENDS. THEN, WHO
KNOWS, MAYBE I'LL GO
AFTER THE SENATE.
HELL, THEY'RE ALL
HALF-WAY IN OUR
POCKET
ALREADY.

BUT, SAY...
CAN YOU GUESS
WHAT I'M SAVING
FOR *DESSERT*?
Huh?

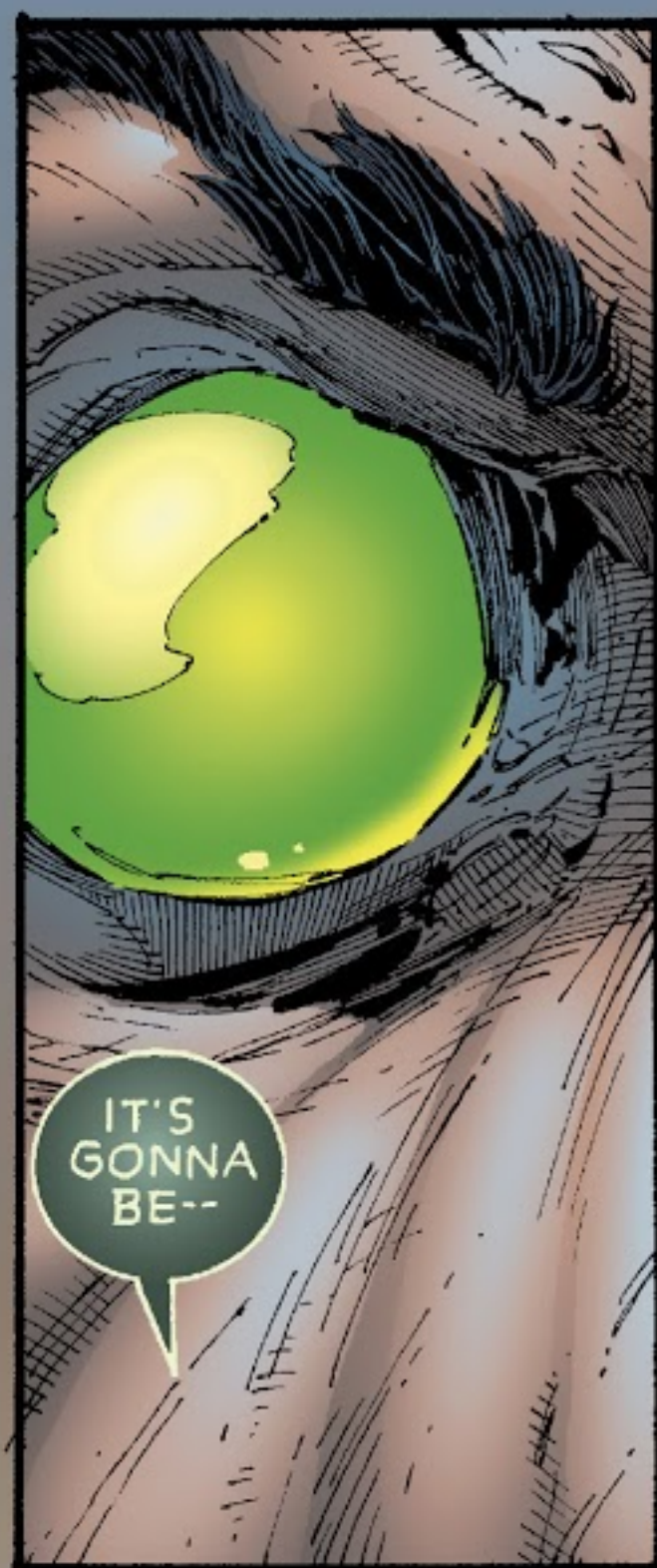
THAT'S
RIGHT. SWEET
LITTLE WANDA-POO.
HAVEN'T QUITE
FIGURED OUT
WHAT I'LL DO
TO HER...

MAYBE I'LL
JUMP INSIDE
TERRY. MAKE
HIM DO *REALLY*
BAD THINGS TO
HIS WIFE. YOU
CAN PICTURE IT,
CAN'T YOU...

ME AND
WANDA...

Ooh, MAN
IT'S GOING TO
BE *SWEET*.
THIRTY-ONE
FLAVORS OF
FUN...

BAW!





TWITCH...?

OH GOD...
I HAD TO...
I COULDN'T
TAKE THE
CHANCE... I
THOUGHT...

DEAR GOD,
I JUST KILLED
AN INNOCENT
MAN. HE HAD
A WIFE... A KID...
WHAT HAVE
I DONE...?

HE'S
GONE...

KINCAID
IS GONE. I
CAN SENSE IT.
HE'S GONE FROM
THE EARTHLY
PLANE...



EPILOGUE:

...ACCORDING TO LEGEND, THE TROJAN WAR BEGAN WHEN PARIS CARRIED OFF THIS DAUGHTER OF ZEUS AND LEDA, THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN ALL OF GREECE.

HELEN. WHO IS HELEN.

Uh... WHO IS APHRODITE?



OH, I'M SO SORRY. WE WERE LOOKING FOR HELEN. HELEN OF TROY.

IDIOT.

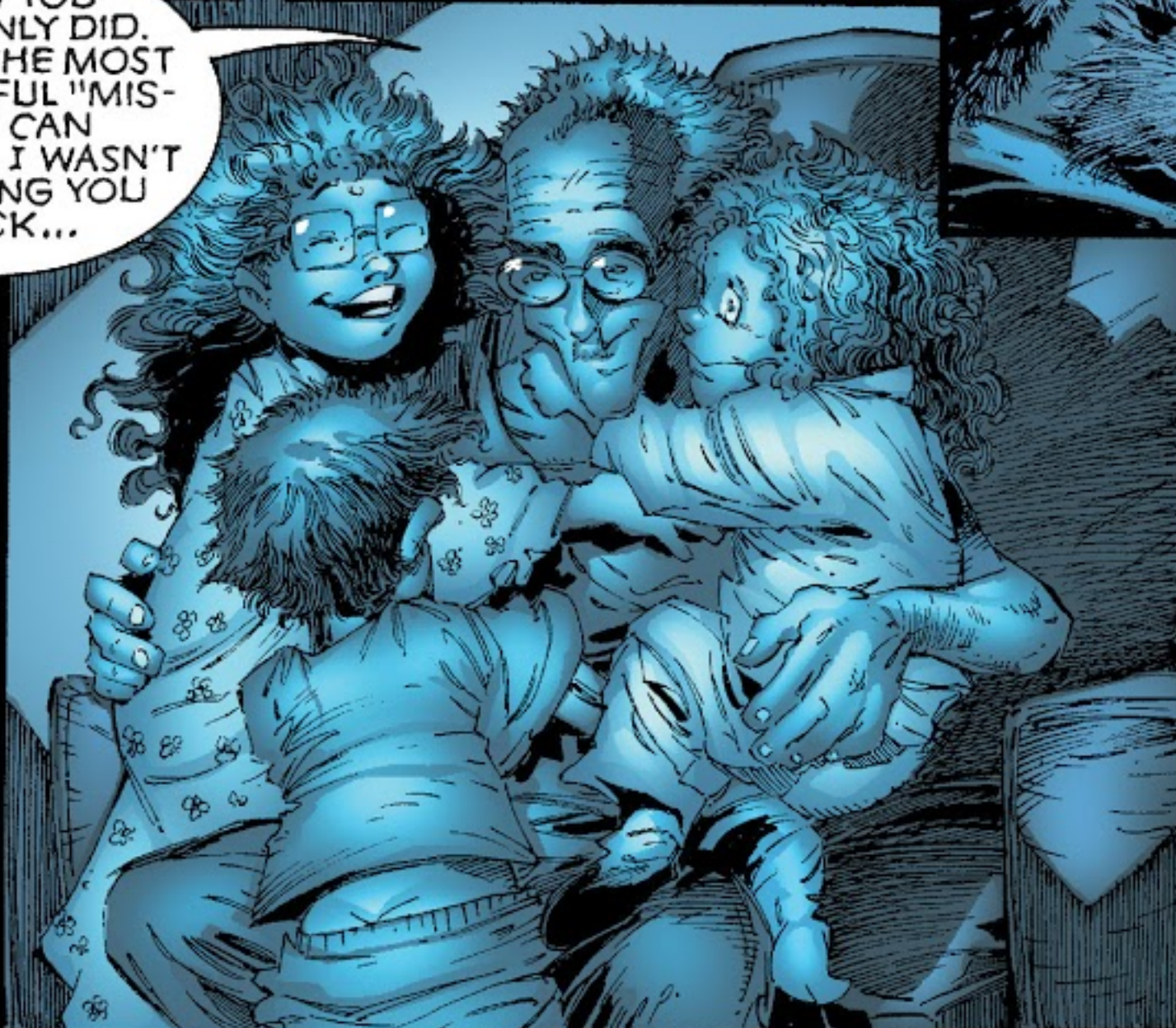
DATTY!

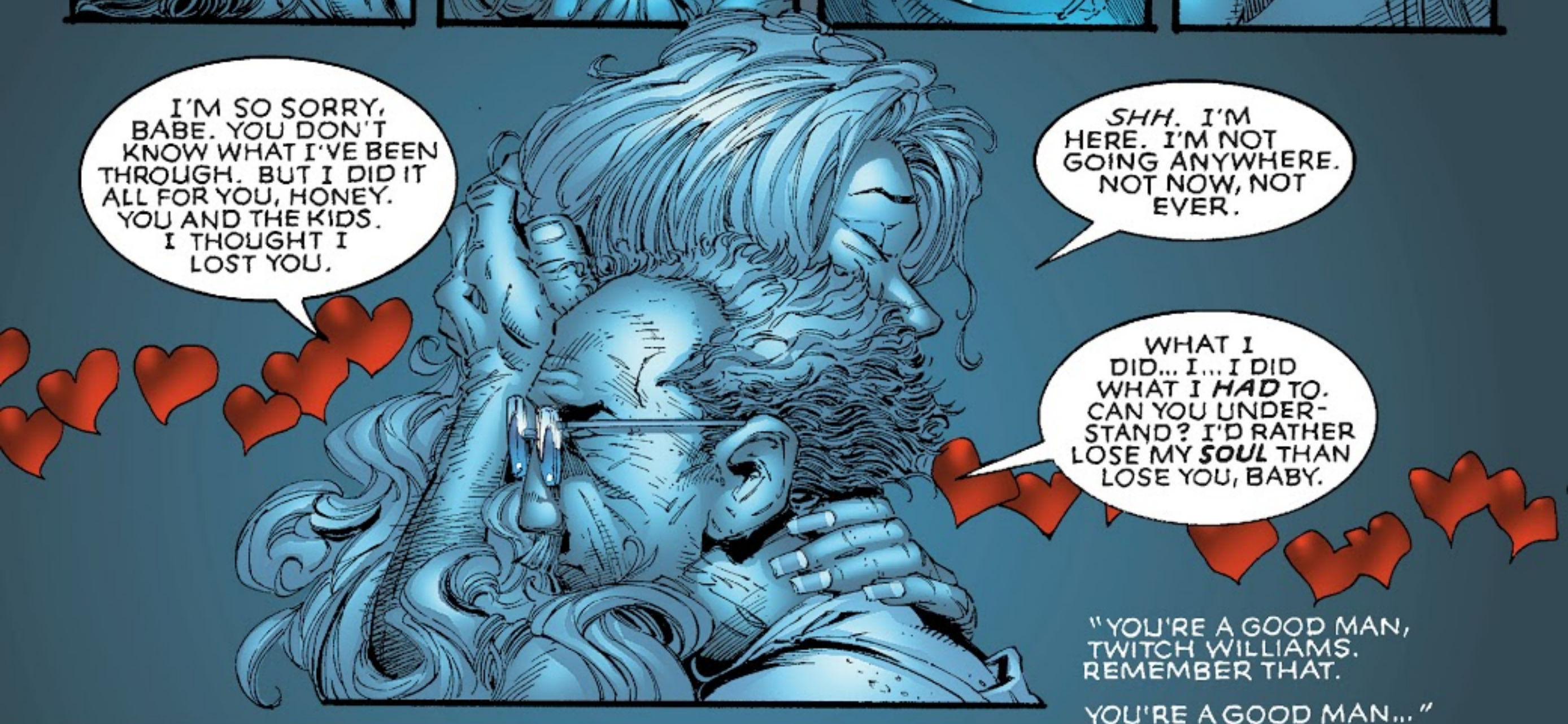
HEY, MUNCHKIN! WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?

THERE' PLANE. WE WANTED TO MIS-PRIZE YOU.

REALLY?

WELL, YOU CERTAINLY DID. THIS IS THE MOST WONDERFUL "MIS-PRIZE" I CAN IMAGINE. I WASN'T EXPECTING YOU BACK...





SPAWN

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Capelli
59
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86
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EDITION



WORM
FOOD...



IN
THE END,
THAT'S ALL WE
AMOUNT TO, ISN'T
IT? DOESN'T MATTER
IF YOU WERE GOOD,
OR BAD. OR
JUST PLAIN
UNLUCKY.



IN THE
END YOU'RE
JUST ANOTHER
COLD SLAB OF
MEAT. DEAD AND
GONE AND
SOON TO BE
FORGOTTEN.



ONE
WAY OR
ANOTHER...
SOONER OR
LATER...
EVERYTHING
DIES...



EVERYTHING
EXCEPT
ME.





KINCAID
WAS RIGHT,
WASN'T HE? EVERY-
THING I DO ONLY
MAKES MATTERS
WORSE. EVERYTHING
I TRY ONLY MAKES
THE DEVIL
STRONGER.

THAT'S
THE REAL
TRUTH,
ISN'T IT?



OF COURSE
NOT. YOU CAN'T
BELIEVE THAT.
IT WAS A BLUFF.
A PLOY.

BILLY WAS JUST
TRYING TO KEEP
YOU OFF-BALANCE,
PREYING ON YOUR
OWN SELF-DOUBT
IN AN EFFORT TO
CONTROL YOU.

FUNNY...
I WAS JUST
THINKING... I
COULD SAY
THE SAME
THING ABOUT
YOU.



PEOPLE
DIED, COG.
BECAUSE OF ME.
THERE'S NO GETTING
AROUND THAT. THERE
ARE MORE SOULS
IN HELL TONIGHT
BECAUSE OF
ME.



EVERY WAR HAS
CASUALTIES, SPAWN. YOU
WERE A SOLDIER. YOU SHOULD
UNDERSTAND THAT. BUT YOU
MUST KEEP YOUR EYE ON
THE **BIG PICTURE**...



YOU KNOW,
OLD MAN... THE
MORE I SEE OF
YOUR "BIG PICTURE,"
THE LESS I
LIKE IT.



GO.
LEAVE ME
ALONE. ALL THE
WORDS IN THE
WORLD WON'T
CHANGE
WHAT I'VE
DONE...



LOOK
AT YOU.
YOU
GODDAMNED
PUSSY...

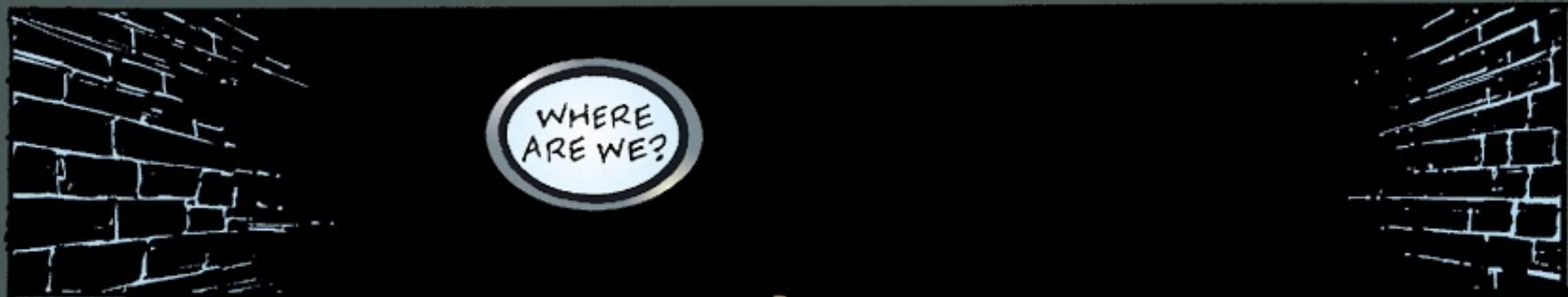


PATHETIC.

DON'T YOU
THINK IT'S ABOUT
TIME YOU GOT OFF
YOUR FREAKIN' ASS
AND **DID**
SOMETHING?







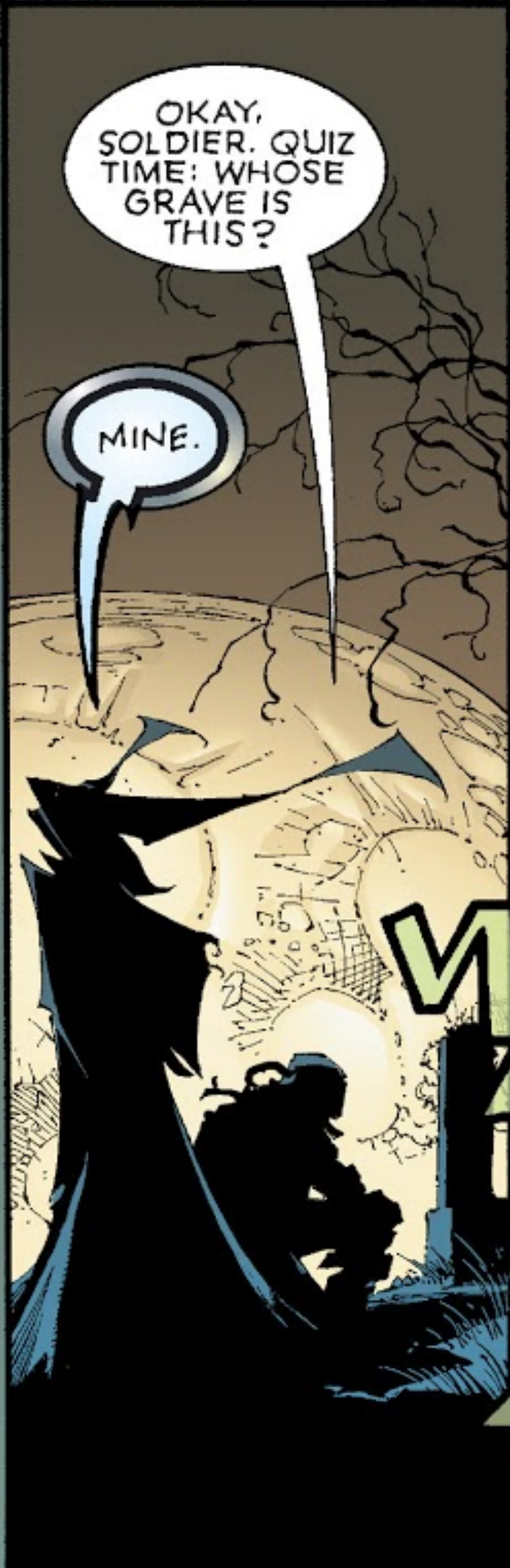
WHERE ARE WE?



NOWHERE.

I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT YOU'D RECOGNIZE IT.

JUST A LITTLE FURTHER. GOT SOMETHING I WANT TO SHOW YOU.



OKAY, SOLDIER. QUIZ TIME: WHOSE GRAVE IS THIS?

MINE.



WRONG.
IT'S
MINE.

AND TO BE
PERFECTLY
HONEST, I'M
SICK TO
DEATH OF
YOU PISSING
ALL OVER
IT.

YOU'RE NOT
ME, GET IT?
YOU'RE NOT AL
SIMMONS. MAYBE
YOU WERE ONCE,
BUT THAT WAS
A LONG TIME
AGO.



TIME
TO BURY
THE PAST,
BUD. SOONER
OR LATER,
EVERYTHING
DIES.

EVEN
ME.



HHNNNN



THIS IS
A LIE. A
TRICK.

OH, YEAH?
THEN WHY
ARE YOU
SHAKING?



YOU'RE SCARED
OF THE TRUTH,
MAN. AFRAID TO DEAL
WITH THE REAL.

THAT'S WHY
YOU LET THAT
OLD MAN BOSS
YOU AROUND, AIN'T
IT? SO YOU DON'T
HAVE TO FEEL
RESPONSIBLE.

MAKES
ME SICK TO
LOOK AT YOU. I
WAS A PROUD
MAN. A MAN
OF ACTION.

BUT
YOU...
WHAT A
WASTE.



YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND...

WHAT?
THAT YOU'RE
TRYING TO FIND
YOUR "TRUE
PATH"? THAT
YOU'RE DOING
THE BEST YOU
CAN?

PROBLEM
IS, YOUR BEST
AIN'T ALL IT'S
CRACKED UP TO
BE, IS IT?



OK, YEAH.
BUDDY, I
KNOW ALL
ABOUT YOUR
"BEST."

LOOK AT
THE WORLD
OF HELL YOU
BROUGHT DOWN
ON ALL THOSE
POOR FOLK IN
THE ALLEYS.

HOW MANY
INNOCENT
PEOPLE WERE
LEFT DEAD IN
YOUR WAKE WHILE
YOU WERE TRYING
TO WORK OUT
YOUR IDENTITY
ISSUES?

I'M SURE
THEY'D FEEL
BETTER IF THEY
KNEW IT WAS ALL
PART OF YOUR
OWN PERSONAL
GROWTH
PROGRAM.



LET'S FACE IT.
CAN YOU THINK OF
ONE LIFE YOU'VE TOUCHED
THAT HASN'T REAPED A
WHIRLWIND OF CRAP
BECAUSE OF YOU?

... ONE
BATTLE YOU'VE
"WON" THAT HASN'T
BLOWN UP IN YOUR
FACE SOMEHOW?

HELL,
YOU EVEN
DRAGGED WANDA
AND HER POOR
LITTLE KID INTO
YOUR CESSPOOL
OF A "LIFE."

'COURSE,
I GUESS IT'S
EASIER TO HIDE
IN THE PAST, MOPING
LIKE FREAKIN'
HAMLET IN THE
ALLEYS.

BUT
BEING A
GOOD SOLDIER
ISN'T ABOUT
DOING WHAT'S
EASY.

THERE
WAS A TIME
YOU KNEW
THAT.





YOU STILL
DON'T GET IT. WANDA
WAS *MY* WOMAN,
NOT YOURS.

IT'S *ME*
SHE MISSES,
BUD. ME SHE
DREAMS ABOUT,
LATE AT NIGHT,
WHEN TERRY
DOESN'T COME
HOME. NOT
YOU.

JUST THE
THOUGHT OF YOU
MAKES HER SKIN
CRAWL. HELL, CAN
YOU BLAME HER?
HOW COULD SOME-
ONE LIKE HER...

SHUT
UP!
SHUT YOUR
DAMN
MOUTH!!

WHAT'S
THE
MATTER,
SLICK?

TRUTH
HURT?

UGHN!!



I'LL
SHOW YOU
HURT!



I DON'T
CARE WHO
YOU ARE.



WHETHER
YOU'RE SOME
DEVIL...



OR SOME
BAD
DREAM...



OR THE
GODDAMN
GHOST OF
CHRISTMAS
PAST.



I'LL
MAKE YOU
SORRY YOU
WERE
EVER...



I'LL...
...



GO ON...
FINISH IT...
DESTROY
ME...



I... I
CAN'T.

YOU HAVE
TO. DON'T YOU
SEE... IT'S THE
ONLY WAY...
FOR BOTH
OF US...

BUT--

LIEUTENANT...
THAT'S AN
ORDER.

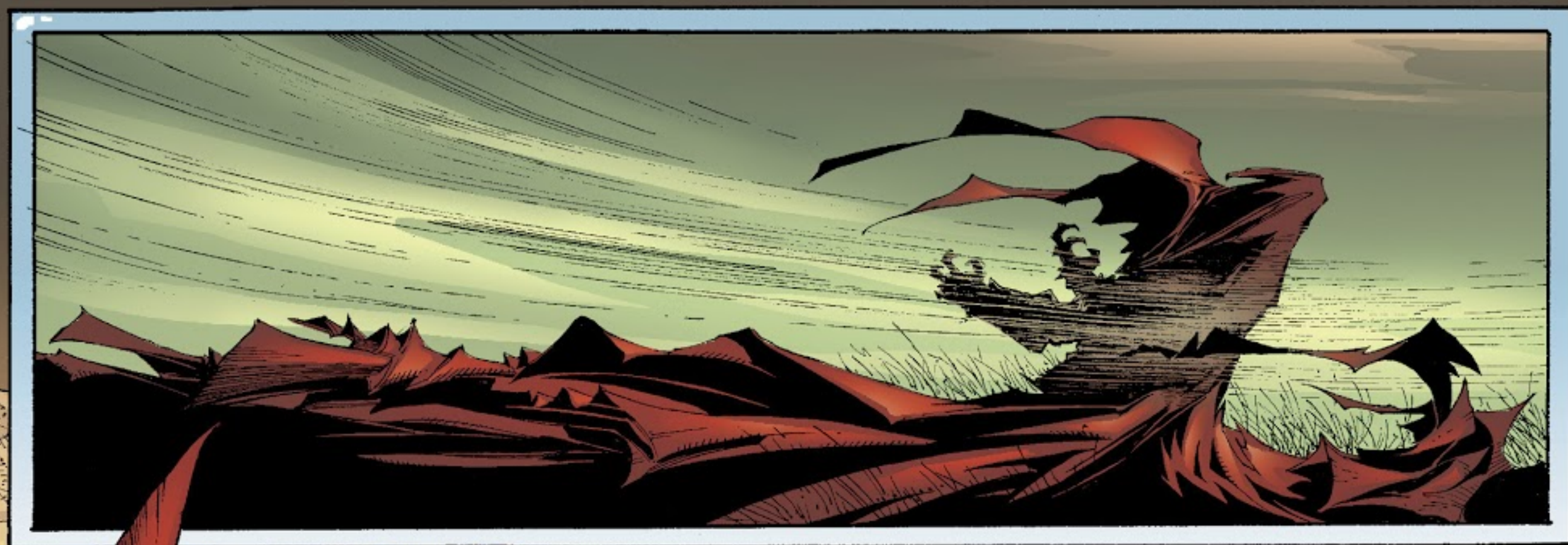


FORGIVE
ME.
REST EASY,
SOLDIER.



WHAT
HAVE I
DONE?





YOU
WERE
RIGHT. I'M
SORRY.

WHEREVER
YOU ARE NOW,
I HOPE YOU'RE
AT PEACE.

GOD
KNOWS
YOU'VE
EARNED IT.
GOODBYE.



SIMMONS





EVERYONE!
LISTEN UP!

I WANT
EVERYBODY OUT
OF THE ALLEYS.
IMMEDIATELY.

WHAT
IS HE
TALKING
ABOUT?

Huh?

OUT OF THE
ALLEYS?

WHY?

TAKE WHAT
YOU WANT, BUT
GET OUT NOW. I'M
ONLY GOING TO TELL
YOU ONCE AND I WON'T
BE RESPONSIBLE FOR
THOSE WHO LAG
BEHIND.



I SAID
MOVE!
NOW!

SKRAA!



SPAWN,
BUDDY...
WAIT UP.
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?

CLEANING
HOUSE.
SOMETHING I
SHOULD HAVE
DONE LONG
AGO.

"CLEANING
HOUSE"? Huh?
WHAT'S THE
GAG? I DON'T
GET IT.

YOU
DON'T
NEED TO
"GET" IT.
JUST GET
OUT!

BUT WHERE
AM I SUPPOSED
TO GO?

THAT'S
NOT MY
PROBLEM.

C'MON, AL. IT'S
ME, BOBBY. JUST TELL
ME WHAT'S GOING ON,
OKAY, AL?

AL?

AL
SIMMONS IS
DEAD. NEVER SPEAK
THAT NAME
AGAIN...

I AM
SPAWN!



KRASH!!
WHAMP!



FFFT



SPAWN,
WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?



TAKING
MATTERS
INTO
MY OWN
HANDS.



I REFUSE
TO BE A
PAWN IN
SOMEONE
ELSE'S
GAME.



FROM
NOW ON,
THE ONLY
RULES
WILL BE
MINE.

FWOOSH!!



ENOUGH!
I DEMAND YOU
STOP THIS NONSENSE
AT ONCE. YOU'RE NOT
THINKING CLEARLY!
DON'T YOU UNDER-
STAND WHAT'S
AT STAKE?

UNHAND
ME, OLD MAN.
YOU ARE IN NO
POSITION TO
DEMAND
ANYTHING.



BETTER
GET OUT
WHILE
YOU STILL
CAN.

KAFF KAFF
DAMN YOU,
SPAWN! WHAT
IN ~~choke~~ HELL
DO YOU THINK
YOU'RE
DOING?



DOING?
ISN'T IT
OBVIOUS?

**I
QUIT.**



SPAWN

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87
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New York is a city
built on ghosts.

Close your eyes and
you can hear them.
Look quickly enough
and you may see them:

The still-born dreams
of immigrant souls,
delivered to Ellis
Island by black
draped coffin ships...

The leaping suicide
bankers of 1929...

The sky-walking Iroquois
laborers buried beneath
the colossal marble
pediments of Manhattan
skyscrapers...

The ceaseless stream of mob
bosses, careless bystanders,
buxom coeds and reclusive pop
stars murdered in the street...

By now
every inch of
this city must
be haunted.

But there is only one
ghost which haunts me.

A black and white illustration of Spawn, a character with long hair in a ponytail and a dark, hooded cloak, standing on a rooftop. He is looking out over a city skyline at dusk or dawn, with several skyscrapers visible. The sky is filled with dramatic, swirling clouds. In the foreground, on the rooftop, there is a desk with a rotary phone, a lamp, and some papers. A small, glowing green box containing Japanese text is visible on the right side of the rooftop.

For years there have been low murmurings among the city's demimonde of a cloaked urban avenger called "SPAWN."

Every age has its legends, and this one is custom made for the cusp of a new millennium. It's perfect.

While the Babel Towers of commerce fail in their quest to touch the hem of God, a spectral agent of justice emerges from the squalid depths of city gutters.

The innocent are protected, the guilty are punished, and evil is vanquished. All of which is pure melodramatic bull-shit, of course, but it makes a nice tale.

ma hitori de shikenshi toki
toyosugite Ah hitozakari
nareba hodo dakedo ma
mama dake yume ni aru
yo kawaii toki ni wa
ai ga aru nara kimi to
uketomae to koi ni ayo
Forever love Forever love
dake ga hageshiki satai
Oh Tell me why All I see is
Will you stay with me kaze
made shuredaru All my love
kono mama soba ni ite yo

Six weeks ago, a mysterious fire blazed through an area of the Bowery given the colorful nomenclature of "Rat City." A place that has seen its share of strange occurrences over the past several years.

A place also known, by some, as "Spawn Alley."

WHAT?
YES, OF
COURSE I'M
WORKING ON--
NO. NO--
IT WILL BE
READY WHEN
IT IS--

MY WHAT?
MY ADVANCE?
DON'T YOU DARE
SPEAK TO
ME--

NO, *YOU*
WILL LISTEN TO
ME. NOW, I
RECOGNIZE THAT
AS AN *EDITOR*
YOU HAVE NO
SOUL, BUT I
WILL NOT-- I
WILL NOT--

OBSESSED?
WHAT ON
EARTH ARE YOU--?
NO! NO! GODDAMNIT,
I AM NOT HAVING
THIS
CONVERSATION.

DON'T
INTERRUPT ME! I'M
HANGING UP. I AM
HANGING UP. PLEASE
ROUTE ALL FUTURE
PARANOIAC OUT-
BURSTS THROUGH
MY AGENT, ALL
RIGHT?

YOU'LL
GET IT WHEN
YOU GET IT. NO.
NO I AM *NOT*--
I--

I AM NOT
OBSESSED...

ETHAN
CRONE.

GO TO
HELL!

SLAM!



INTERVIEW #7.
"Stiv and Lyssa"



So what... do I just start? Cool. Okay. Yeah, I've heard of Spawn. I used to scam down near the alleys. Dudes 'round there were pretty cool.



Mostly they're old guys, though. It gets really depressing with the old guys. Like they're never gonna change. Whatever you are at 40, that's what you'll be forever, right? Not me, though. I got plans. Don't we, hon? Big plans.



So yeah, Spawn. I heard he's a black dude. They did something to him in the war. Like gave him superpowers. Mutation experiment or something. All kinds of weird alien shit. Like in that movie, the one with that guy from the other one. No?



I saw him a couple times. Spawn, I mean. Never talked to him though. I just kinda kept my distance. Struck me as the kinda guy who appreciates his privacy, know what I'm saying?



What?
(unintelligible)



So, uh, listen dude... Are we like getting paid for this or what?

INTERVIEW #11
"Jaka"



You here to make me famous, friend? Is that what this is about? To bring my god-given talent to the people, let me shine a little righteous light into this dark, dark world? All right. I'm ready for my close-up, mister man!



Spawn? Listen, brother, you don't want to go there. That's messin' wit' some deep-dark-hella-evil-mikki-fikkin-mojo there. Alla that devil crap? Man, just leave it out. Why you wanna know 'bout sumpin' like that?



Nah, I ain't never seen him. But my pal Rudi has. Saw him skin a man alive and feed him to his dogs. And he's got this stare, right? Just holds you to the spot. Hypnotic, like. He's one messed up cat, I can tell you that much.



You ask me, I think its some kinda voodoo-zombie shit. My granddaddy was a magic man down in N'awlins, he knew all about that crap. He was a healer. One time, when I was kid, I saw him cast seven devils outta his ol' whore.



YAAAA-AAGHOOOA!
HAAAGH! An' alla demons come pourin' outcher mouth, like bats and snakes and lizards. Like you're pukin' up a zoo or something. Don't play wit' that stuff, I'm telling you. For real.



Walk the path of the righteous man, my brother. The devil is everywhere and it only takes one moment of weakness. You best be keeping your eyes open in this bitch world. Know'm say'n?

INTERVIEW #14
"Willie, Chet and Bigfoot"



-Yeah, we knew 'im. Real well, too.
-Oh yeah, I was right there when he torched --
-Pals we were. His posse, like in the westerns
-Man I love westerns. Ever see that one, 'bout that bad ass sheriff --



-Hey remember the time he fought that big metal dude, Robo-wop or whatever? What was his name? The pentium Guinea?
-Oh, man, was that sweet! He got him by the throat like this. Wa-POW!



-And then the robot dude, he gets Spawny in a headlock, like grinding his nose into the pavement. It was brutal!
-No. That's not how it (unintelligible) happened. Let go of my (unintelligible)...



-Those were the days, man. Kickin' ass, takin' names. Before he got all morose and moody.
-Yeah. I miss the big guy. I really do. As far as walking corpses go, he was the best.
-Hey, what ever happened to that freaky monkey?
-Uh oh...



Hey... uh... sorry 'bout your shoes, dude.

INTERVIEW #14
"Bobby"



I guess I'd like to think we were friends. I know that sounds weird, but that's how it felt to me. I remember when he first came here, some of the other guys wanted him to leave. Not that you could make him leave or anything like that...



But I always said, hey, he's one of us. Poor sucker's lost his home, his family, his whole life. Just tryin' ta make the best out of a bad situation. Isn't that what we're all doing? All of us?



But I never thought he'd just up and leave like that. It was really hard. That last night, before it happened, you could see something in him had changed. Something switched over in him for good, and that was that.



I don't blame him or nothing. Like I said, it's just really hard. See a while back, I lost another friend. His name was Bootsy. At least that's what we called him. Real smart guy. Always looked after me. Closer than brothers.



Turns out Bootsy was an angel. An' I don't mean that like he was a nice guy, but that he was an actual, real life angel, sent to watch over us. He saved Spawn's life once. And then he had to leave. Said he'd always look out for me, though.



But it don't feel like anyone's looking out for ol' Bobby these days. Every year, these old bones get a little creakier, the days seem a little shorter. Everyday, it's like there's just less of me. Excuse me. Gimme a sec, will ya?



Let me tell you something about Spawn, I don't think anyone ever really understood... Well, to tell the truth, I think he was lonely. Sounds funny, I know, big tough guy like that. But I really think he was.



I mean, I know what it's like to feel you ain't got nothing in this world. Like no matter what you do, you're best days are long behind you and even they were pretty crappy now that you think about it.



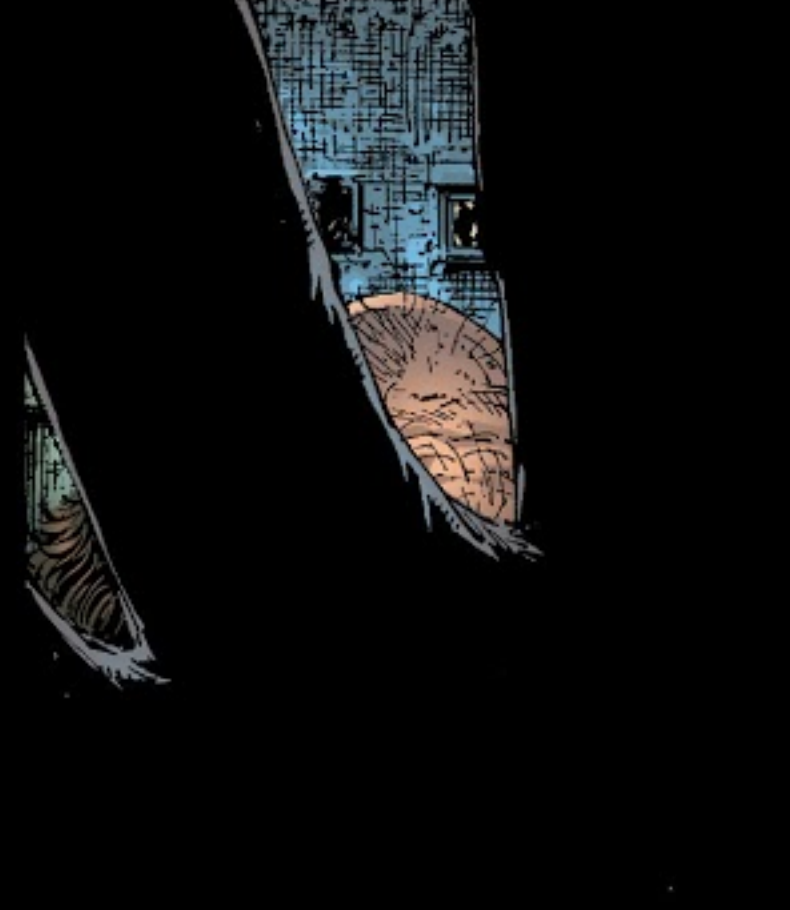
Sometimes things get so bleak, you just gotta laugh. Most people don't know this, but ol' Al could have quite a sense of humor when the mood struck him. He had this real deep, booming laugh. I remember once -- Wait. I'm sorry.



Not "Al." Spawn. Spawn. Not Al. He told me not to call him that no more. "Never speak that name again," that's what he said. I'm sorry. I just forgot for a minute. Do you think you can maybe cut that part out?



Anyways... I know I'm rambling, I'm sorry... I guess I'm saying sometimes this world gets so cold, and sometimes the only thing you have to keep you from going under is your friends, and then they go and leave you and...



I'm sorry. Can we just stop now. Please?

INTERVIEW #17
"Sam and Twitch"



-Actually, we're "Ex"-ex-cops now. Come Monday, we are once again part of the Thin Blue Line that separates civilization from anarchy.*
-"Thin" being used rather metaphorically here, of course.
-Bite me Twitch. So what did ya want to know about?

**see "Sam and Twitch #1" for details.*



- "Health Spa?" Twitch, you know anything about a health spa? Huh? Oh. "Hell Spawn." Gotcha. Scourge of the alleys, caped avenger of New York City? The urban bogeyman, Spawn the Undead? Nah. Never heard of him.



-Although there was one caped marauder as I recall, sir. Do you remember?
-Oh, jeez. I almost forgot. This was years ago, we're still in uniform back then. Get some call about a woman being attacked by a crazed super hero.



-So we get to the place, check it out. Naked woman tied to her bed, some dude out cold on the floor wearing a Batman mask, a cape, and goddamn nothing else. So what do I do? I go to cuff the intruder.

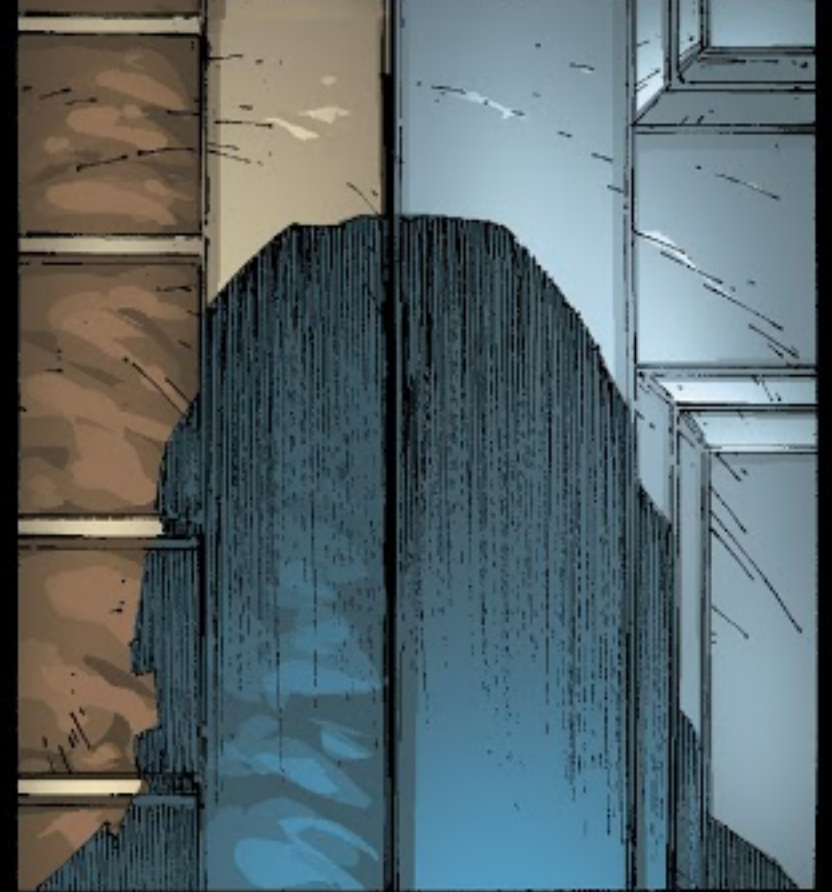


-And then the broad starts screeching: "Stop it! You'll kill him!" Turns out it was some kinda kinky game. Chick's boy friend would dress up like an idiot and pounce on her from on top of the dresser. Got her real hot.



-Only this time the poor bastard knocks his head on the ceiling lamp. Boom! Out like a light. So she's tied up, her boyfriend is in a coma for she knows, and she screams blue murder. Man, I seen some weird crap in my time, but that takes the goddamn cake!

INTERVIEW #20
"Wanda and Terry"



-Yes?
-Good evening. I don't mean to bother you. I was wondering if I could ask you a few questions--
-What is this about?
-I understand you've had contact with someone called Spawn.

-What?!
-Just a moment of your time. Please. Now correct me if I'm wrong, but your first husband, his name was Al, right? Al Simmons...

Slam



-What do you think you're doing, upsetting my wife like that?
-I'm sorry. If I could just ask a few questions I'd greatly appreciate --
-You know what, little man?

-I would greatly appreciate it if you got the hell off my property before I have to stick my foot up your ass. How's that for a goddamn quote?

INTERVIEW #22
"Corgie"



I'm not making no claims about nothing. I only know what I saw, and like I told you that ain't much. It was maybe six months ago, a little after eleven in the p.m. I remember that 'cause the Met had just got out.



So I pick up this fare and we're headin' towards Soho, when BAM!, something comes out of nowhere. Out of the sky, like. Falls smack bang on the hood of my ride. I thought a bomb went off.



I mean look at that. You want proof, there it is. You see, whatever it was did some real damage. You'd think that woulda killed a person. I hit the brakes and this, this guy or this thing rolls off on to the ground.



I stare at him for maybe one second, but it felt like forever. I mean I can't believe what's going on. I'm thinking I'm gonna lose my hack license for squashing a ped, but this guy just stands up. I remember his eyes. Green, like cat's eyes in the dark.



And then he was gone. It happened so fast I wouldn't believe it if it weren't for the damage he done. Meanwhile I got a coupla fares in back panicking, wondering what's going on. It was a peculiar night.



Never saw him again and still have no idea what the hell that thing was. But I tell you one thing. It was real. And whatever it was, they don't write insurance for crap like that. No sir, they sure don't.

INTERVIEW #24
"Identity Unknown"



I understand you are inquiring about the existence of some mysterious urban avenger. The Hell Spawn? How fascinating. May I ask you, have you met with much success?



Oh, no. I'm afraid I couldn't be of any help to you. I have little experience with such sordid matters. Dark alleys, blood oaths, vengeance from beyond the grave... No, really not my cup of tea.



I was just curious to know the results of your research. If you had found any concrete evidence regarding this creature's existence. Personal interest. Let's just leave it at that, shall we?



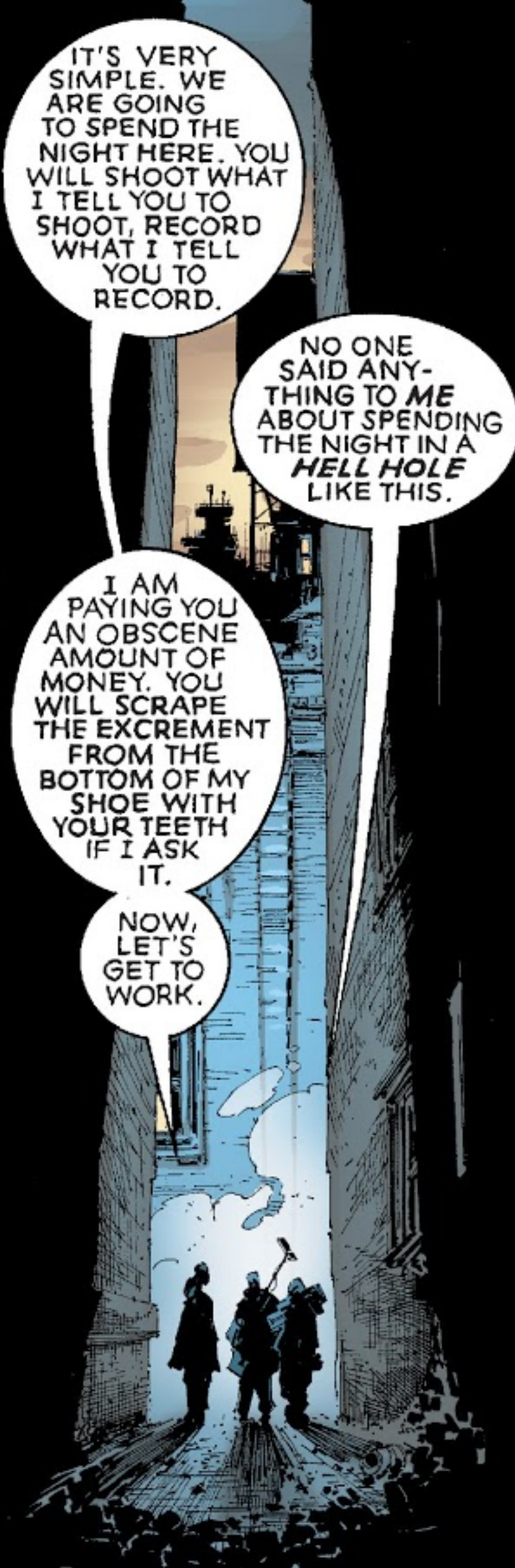
Of course, I realize you have a publisher. And I can appreciate that a contract is a contract. After all, we are nothing if we cannot keep our word, wouldn't you agree?



But anything you turn up -- particularly the Spawn's current whereabouts -- well, let's just say I am in a position to discuss a very generous bargain, should you be so inclined.



Oh no, that won't be necessary. Believe me, when the time comes I will know how to contact you. Good evening, then.



12:05
A.M. ...

LEFT TO MY
OWN DEVICES, I MAKE
A RECONNAISSANCE OF THE
GENERAL AREA. IT'S MUCH
LARGER THAN I
EXPECTED AND STILL
LARGELY DESERTED.

ADMITTEDLY
I AM NOT
AN EXPERT, BUT
FROM WHAT I
CAN TELL, THE
FIRE THAT
SWEEPED THROUGH
HERE WAS
HIGHLY
IRREGULAR.

SOME
AREAS ARE
SCORCHED SO
DEEP, THE BRICKS
HAVE MELTED...
YET FLAMMABLE
SURFACES NEAR-
BY REMAIN
UNTOUCHED.

IT IS
ALMOST AS
IF THE FIRE HAD
A SPECIFIED
OBJECTIVE.

AS A
PERSONAL
OBSERVATION, IT
SEEMS INCONCEIV-
ABLE THAT ANYONE
WOULD INTENTIONALLY
CHOOSE THIS
PLACE AS A
HOME.

IT IS
FETID AND
MUSTY AND
REEKS OF
ANCIENT
GARBAGE.

IT'S
GOING
TO BE A
LONG, DARK
NIGHT
AHEAD.



3:15 A.M. ...
THE LAST OF
THE COFFEE IS
GONE. THE
CAFFEINE IS
MAKING ME
JITTERY.

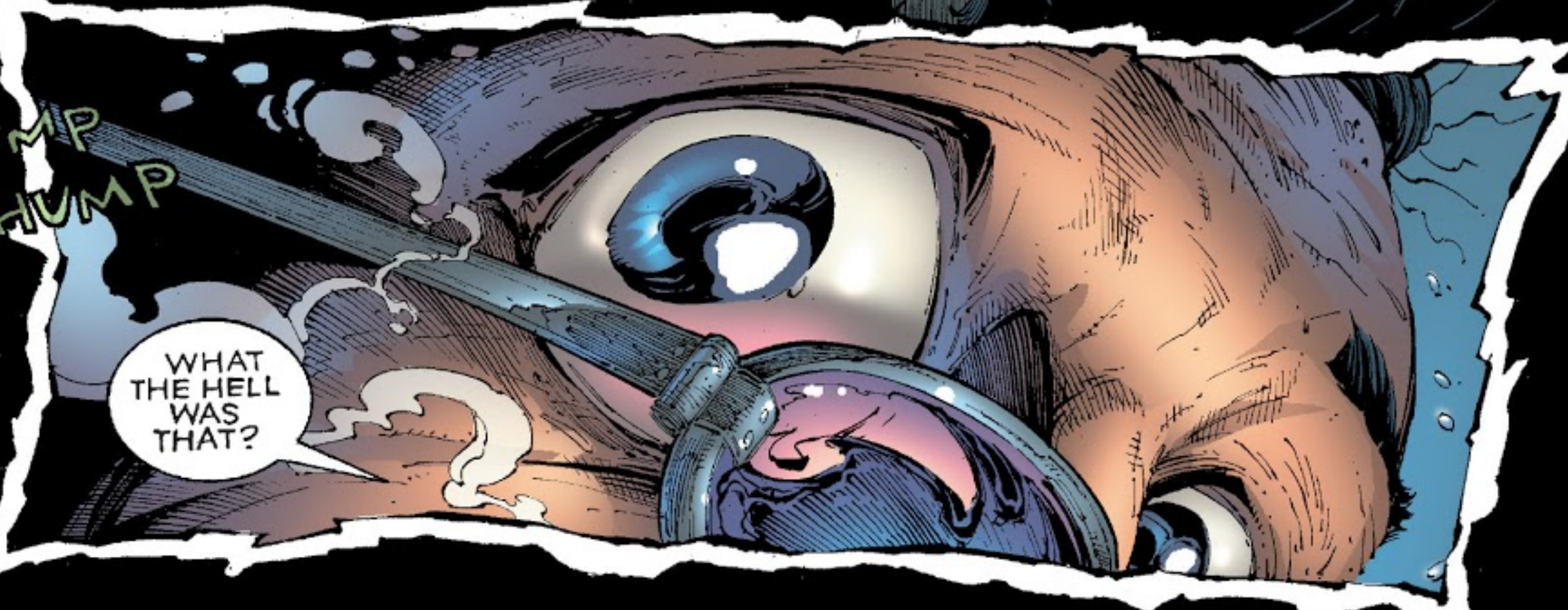
FUNNY. ALONE
IN THE DARK WITH
ONE'S THOUGHTS
LIKE THIS, IT... IT
CAN BE VERY
DISCONCERTING.

EVERY
SOUND, EVERY
SHIFT OF THE
COUNTLESS,
OVERLAPPING
SHADOWS AND
MY MUSCLES
LEAP WITH
ADRENALINE.

I STILL
DON'T KNOW
WHAT I'M
EXPECTING TO
FIND, BUT I
WILL REMAIN
TILL
SUNRISE.

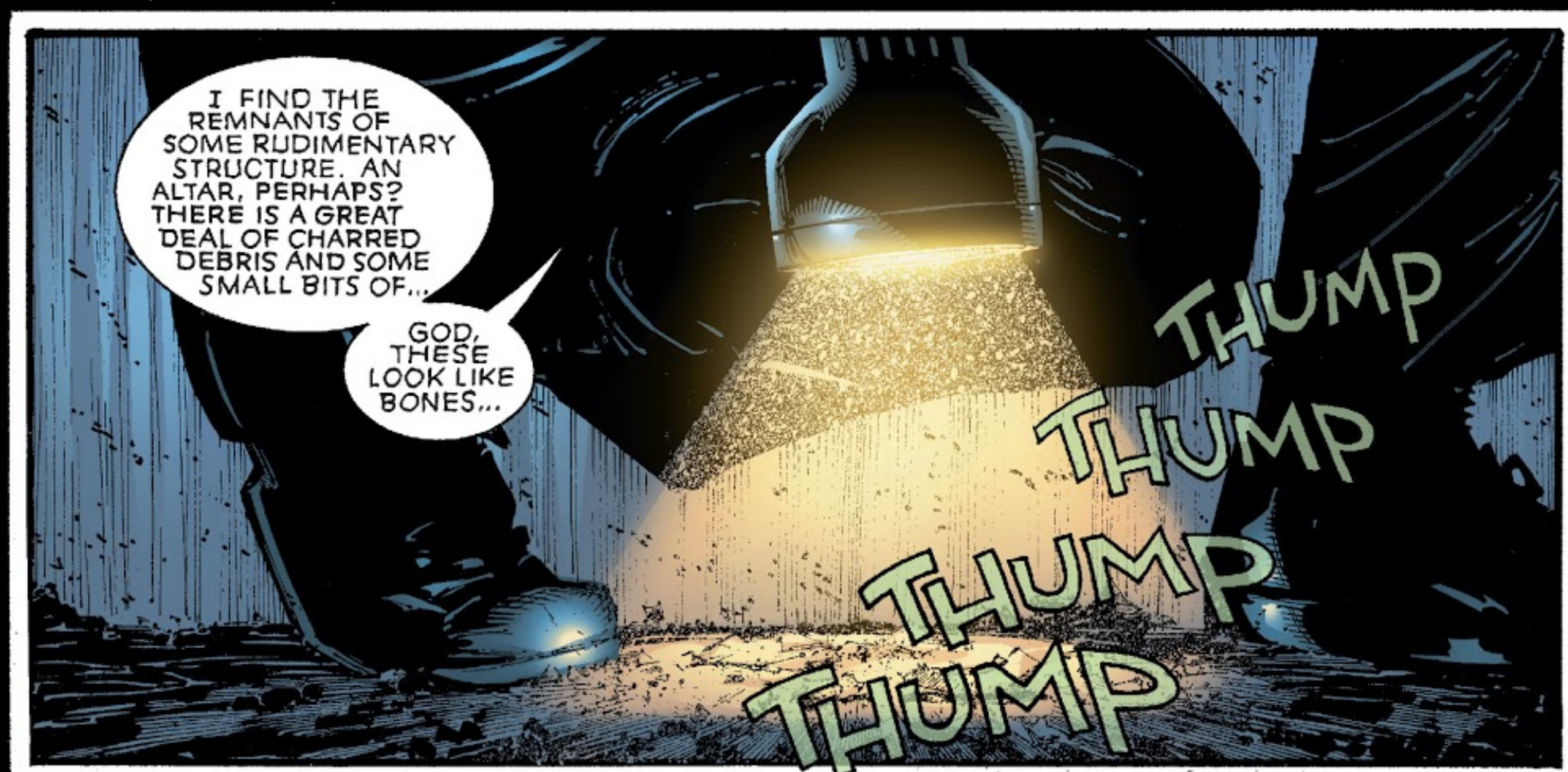


COME OUT,
COME OUT
WHEREVER
YOU ARE...



THUMP
THUMP

WHAT
THE HELL
WAS
THAT?





WHERE IS-- I HAVE TRACKED THE NOISE TO AN OLD BOARDED-UP WINDOW.



I CAN'T SEE ANY--



HAAAH!

SON OF A BITCH.



AAAAH!

NO! PLEASE!

FOR THE
LOVE OF GOD,
**WHAT
ARE
YOU?**





PLEASE. I GOTTA KNOW. I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE BOOK, OR ABOUT THE -- THE MONEY OR ANY OF THAT. I JUST WANT TO KNOW. FOR ME.

THERE'S SOMETHING GOING ON. I'VE SEEN IT. BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT.

SOMETHING HAPPENED IN THOSE ALLEYS, GODDAMN IT, AND I JUST HAVE TO KNOW WHAT IT IS. I CAN'T SLEEP TILL I KNOW.

PLEASE. I'M BEGGING YOU. JUST TELL ME THE TRUTH.

THAT'S ALL I WANT.

TELL ME THE TRUTH ABOUT *SPAWN*.

THE TRUTH? VERY WELL, I'LL TELL YOU. BUT I DON'T THINK YOU'LL LIKE IT. FUNNY THING ABOUT LIFE. THE TRUTH IS ALMOST NEVER WHAT YOU HOPED IT WOULD BE.

THE TRUTH IS THIS: THERE IS NO *SPAWN*.

THERE NEVER WAS.

JUST SOME OLD FOOLS TELLING STORIES AROUND THE BONFIRE, TRYING TO PASS THE TIME.

YOU'RE CHASING A SHADOW, MR. CRONE. NOTHING MORE. *THAT'S* THE REAL TRUTH.





"This city was
built on ghosts.
Maybe some of
them deserve to
rest in peace."

THESE ALLEYS
BELONG TO
A PAWN

NEXT: AT THE
CROSSROADS





SPAWN

Capullo
M'FARLANE



88

DIGITAL
EDITION

WWW.MCFARLANE.COM

My name is MARY.
I am in deep, dark TROUBLE.

Seth locked me in my room so
I could think about what I did.

He says
if Mommie
and me
want to live
under his
roof, we
have to
respect his
rules.

I can't expect to grow up
right if I don't learn respect.

This is for my own good.
It's the only way
I will learn.

If I don't straighten
up, I will be nothing
but a dirty, no-good
SLUT, no better than a
dog. That's what
he told momma.

Tonight I will get my
PUNISHMENT. Seth said when
the FIGHTS are over, he's going
to teach me a lesson.

Until then,
I am to wait
here and keep
my smart
mouth shut.

I'm sorry I was SO BAD.

The fights started a little bit ago.
I can hear Seth saying bad
words to the TV.

NEED A
TAKE A
LEAK...

It's his TV and he
paid good money
for it, and no one
has the right to
touch it but him.

Footsteps...

HEY, LITTLE
MISSY. I HOPE
YOU'RE THINKING
LONG AND HARD
ABOUT WHAT
YOU DID.

YOUR
MOMMA'S
WORKING THE
LATE SHIFT
TONIGHT, SO
SHE WON'T BE
AROUND TO
HELP YOU
NONE.

I AIN'T
GONNA HAVE NO
SPOILT LITTLE CRY-BABIES
IN MY HOUSE. YOU START
SHOWIN' A LITTLE GRATITUDE
OR YOU AND YOUR OLD
LADY'RE OUT ON YOUR
ASS. YOU GOT
THAT?

I hold tight to my Molly,
and wish momma was here.
But if she was here, she'd
probably get a whupping too.

I don't want
mommy to get
hurt for some-
thing I did.

YES,
SIR.

I have
to take my
medicine
like a
big girl.

I'm supposed to
sit here, all alone,
and think about
my actions. Only
thing is...

*I don't think I'm
ALONE anymore.*



EVER HAVE THE FEELING THAT YOU'RE WALKING INTO YOUR OWN FUNERAL? OR THAT YOU'RE ABOUT TO SIT DOWN TO A MEAL WHERE YOU'RE THE MAIN COURSE?

THAT'S PRETTY MUCH HOW I FEEL RIGHT NOW.

AH, GOOD EVENING, SIR. YOUR PARTY IS WAITING.

THANK YOU.

HERE WE ARE, SIR.

THE OAK ROOM AT THE PLAZA. ONE OF THE FINEST RESTAURANTS IN THE HEMISPHERE. AT THIS MOMENT, I'D RATHER BE ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD.

STRAIGHT OFF, THE ANGELIC TWIT TRIES TO MAKE FRIENDS. TYPICAL.

COUNT **COGLIOSTRO**, I PRESUME. IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU.

I AM **AMBASSADOR EPIPHANI**. I HAVE BEEN SENT TO REPRESENT THE **SERAPHIC ASSEMBLY**. PLEASE HAVE A SEAT.

LISTEN, MY DEAR GIRL. IT'S BAD ENOUGH THAT WE HAVE TO BE HERE. LET'S NOT MAKE IT WORSE BY PRETENDING TO LIKE EACH OTHER.

AS YOU WISH.

SO, WHOM DO YOU THINK HE'LL BE SENDING? I HOPE IT'S NOT ONE OF THOSE AWFUL **PHLEBIAC BROTHERS**.

NO. NOT FOR THIS. MY GUESS IS HE'LL SEND ONE OF THE **THIRSTING BARONS**, OR PERHAPS THE **LORD OF WHISPERS**.

BUT WHOEVER HE'S SENDING, HE'S LATE.

AFTER A FEW MINUTES OF AWKWARD, MIND-NUMBING SILENCE, A RUMBLE BEGINS TO PASS THROUGH THE CROWD.

AT FIRST I THOUGHT IT WAS A MOVIE STAR ARRIVING, OR PERHAPS ONE OF THOSE IDIOT BILLIONAIRES ONE ALWAYS SEES IN THE NEWSPAPERS.

I CAN'T BELIEVE MY EYES. THIS IS MUCH WORSE THAN I EVER IMAGINED. I DON'T THINK THE POOR GIRL WAS PREPARED FOR THIS, EITHER.

I'M AFRAID IT IS...

BY THE BLESSED CHALICE! IT CAN'T BE...

SHE AND I WERE BOTH WRONG. HE DIDN'T SEND ANYONE TO SPEAK FOR HIM. INSTEAD, HE SHOWED UP HIMSELF.

COGLIOSTRO, EPIPHANI. GOOD EVENING. I APOLOGIZE FOR MY TARDINESS. I WAS HELD UP IN CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS. COULDN'T BE HELPED.

WELL THEN, SHALL WE GET DOWN TO IT?

"Think long and hard about what you did, Mary."

"This is for your own good, Mary."

I didn't mean it. Honest.

It was an accident. But that's no excuse for my sorry attitude.

If I can't respect other people's things, then maybe I don't deserve to LIVE in a nice place like this.

I was just so HAPPY.

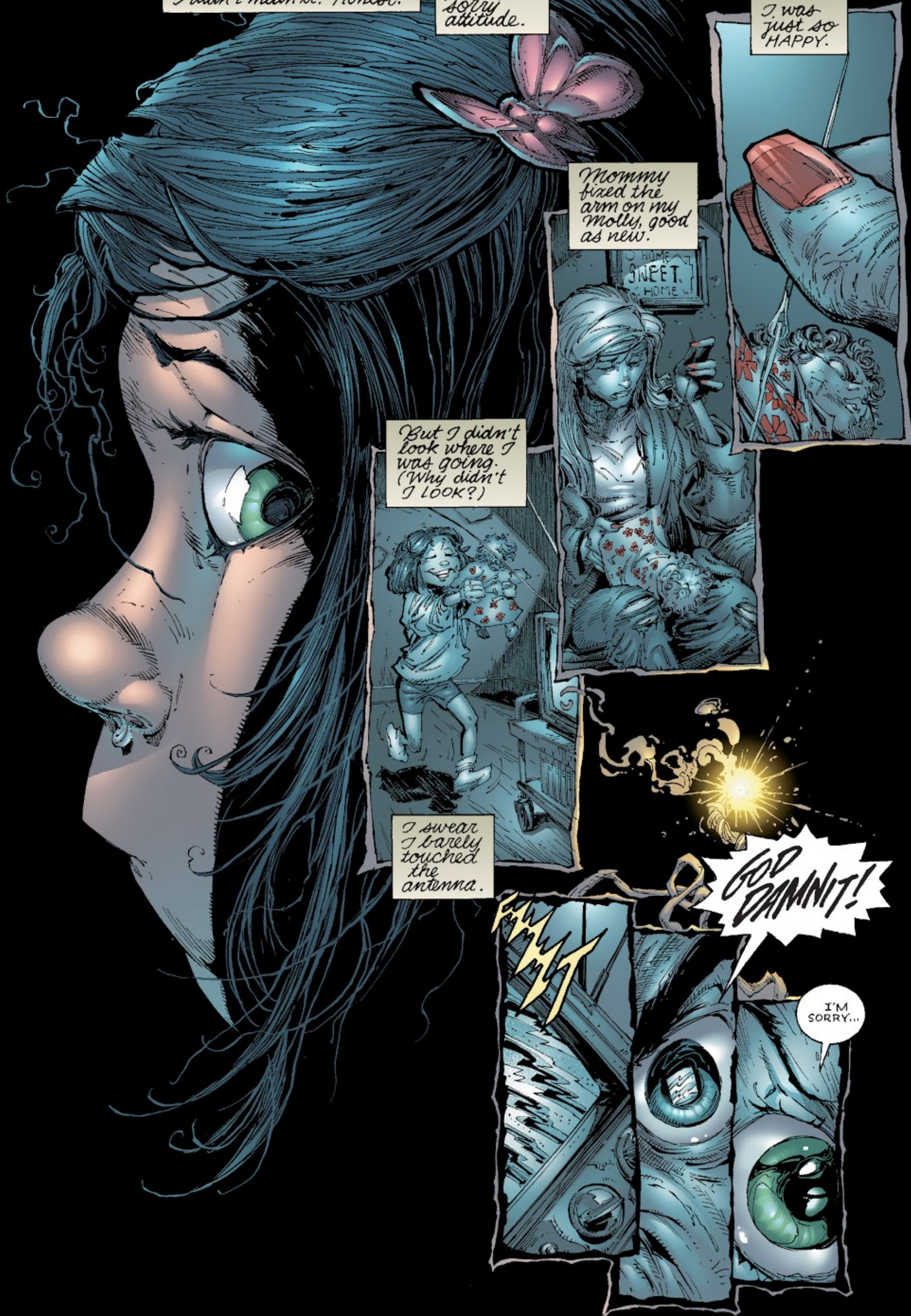
Mommy fixed the arm on my Molly, good as new.

But I didn't look where I was going. (Why didn't I LOOK?)

I swear I barely touched the antenna.

GOD DAMNIT!

I'M SORRY...



**YOU
LITTLE BITCH!
WHAT THE HELL
DID YOU JUST
DO?!**

YOU
KNOW
I WAS
WATCHING
THAT! YOU
DID THAT ON
PURPOSE!

NO!
I DIDN'T
MEAN IT!
OWW!

I DON'T
ASK FOR MUCH
IN THIS GODDAMN
WORLD! AFTER
BUSTING MY HUMP
ALL DAY, ALLS I
WANT IS TO SIT IN
FRONT OF THE TUBE
IN PEACE! IS
THAT SO MUCH
TO ASK?

BUT NO,
YOU GOTTA GO
AND RUIN THAT
TOO, YOU SPOILED
LITTLE PIECE OF
TRASH!

ACCIDENT
MY ASS! THAT'S
NO EXCUSE FOR
HER SORRY
ATTITUDE.

SETH,
STOP IT!
IT WAS AN
ACCIDENT!

I'M SICK
AND TIRED
OF GETTING
NO RESPECT
IN MY OWN
HOUSE!

WHAT DID
I TELL YOU
ABOUT THAT
TV? WHAT DID
I TELL YOU?!

I WANT
YOU TO THINK
LONG AND HARD ABOUT
WHAT YOU DID. AND I
DON'T WANT TO HEAR A
PEEP OUT OF YOU TILL I
FIGURE OUT WHAT YOUR
PUNISHMENT IS
GOING TO BE.

IS THAT
CLEAR?

YES,
SIR.

NEVER TO
TOUCH IT.

THAT'S
GODDAMN
RIGHT. IT'S
MY TV.
I PAID FOR
IT! NOT
YOU!

That was three days ago.

I wanted to cry, but I was afraid Seth would hear me. I tried to sleep, but I was too scared for that, too.

I guess maybe Seth doesn't like kids. I think he had kids before and had to send them AWAY. That was before Mommy and me moved in.

I saw an old picture on Seth's dresser once, but Mommy told me never, EVER to bring them up again.

I always wondered what happened to them. Like where they went and stuff. And if where they are was better than here.

On the second night, I think I found them.

They were hiding in my closet the whole time. Funny, I'd never seen them there before.

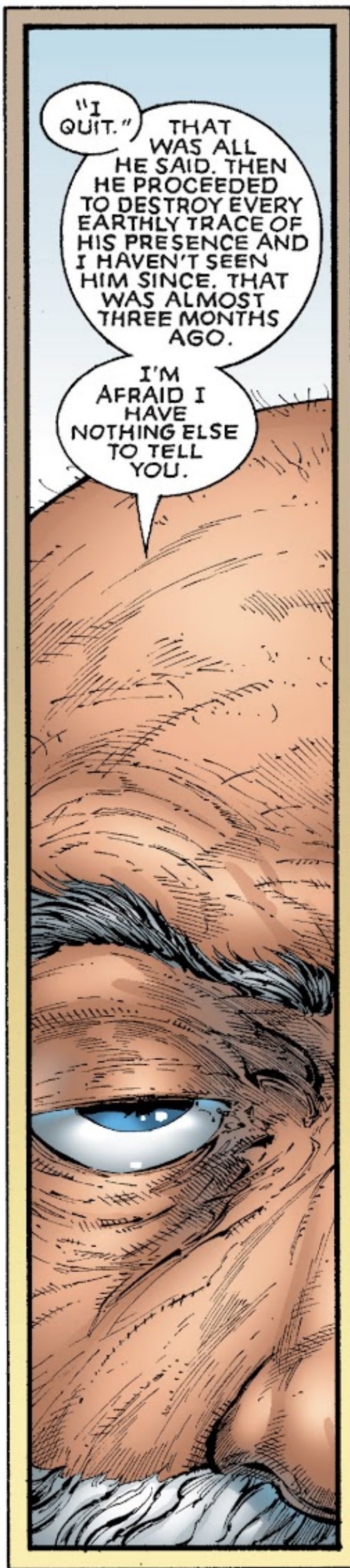
They couldn't talk and they were shaking real bad. When I turned on the light, they were gone.

Maybe I was just dreaming. But I don't think so.

The next night, SOMEONE NEW came to visit me.

HE'S still out there.

The man in the RED CAPE.



"I QUIT."

THAT WAS ALL HE SAID. THEN HE PROCEEDED TO DESTROY EVERY EARTHLY TRACE OF HIS PRESENCE AND I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE. THAT WAS ALMOST THREE MONTHS AGO.

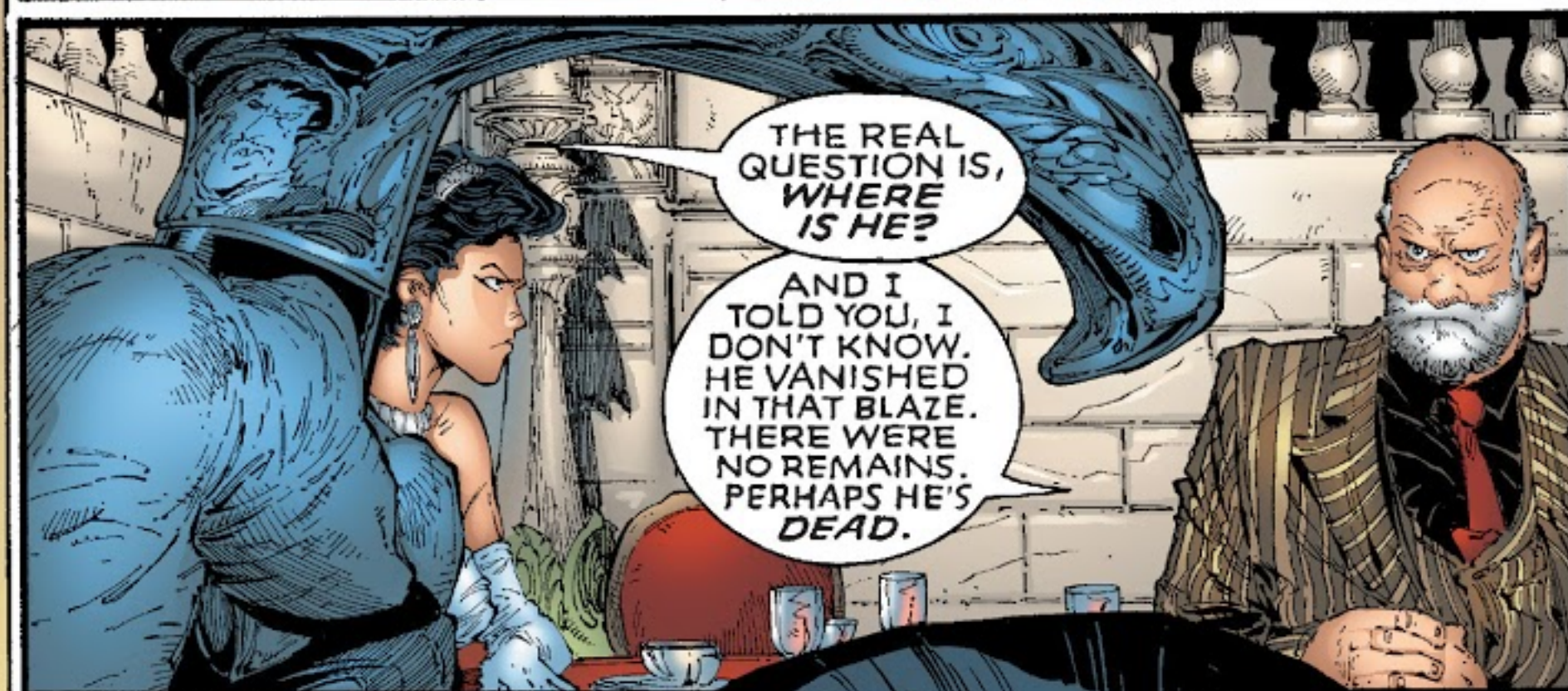
I'M AFRAID I HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO TELL YOU.



HE "QUIT"? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? HE CAN'T QUIT. THIS ISN'T A PARLOR GAME.

ISN'T IT?

PLEASE DON'T BE FLIPPANT, COGLIOSTRO. I'M SURE EVEN YOU CAN UNDERSTAND HOW SERIOUS THIS IS. THIS HAS NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE. IT CHANGES **EVERYTHING**.



THE REAL QUESTION IS, **WHERE IS HE?**

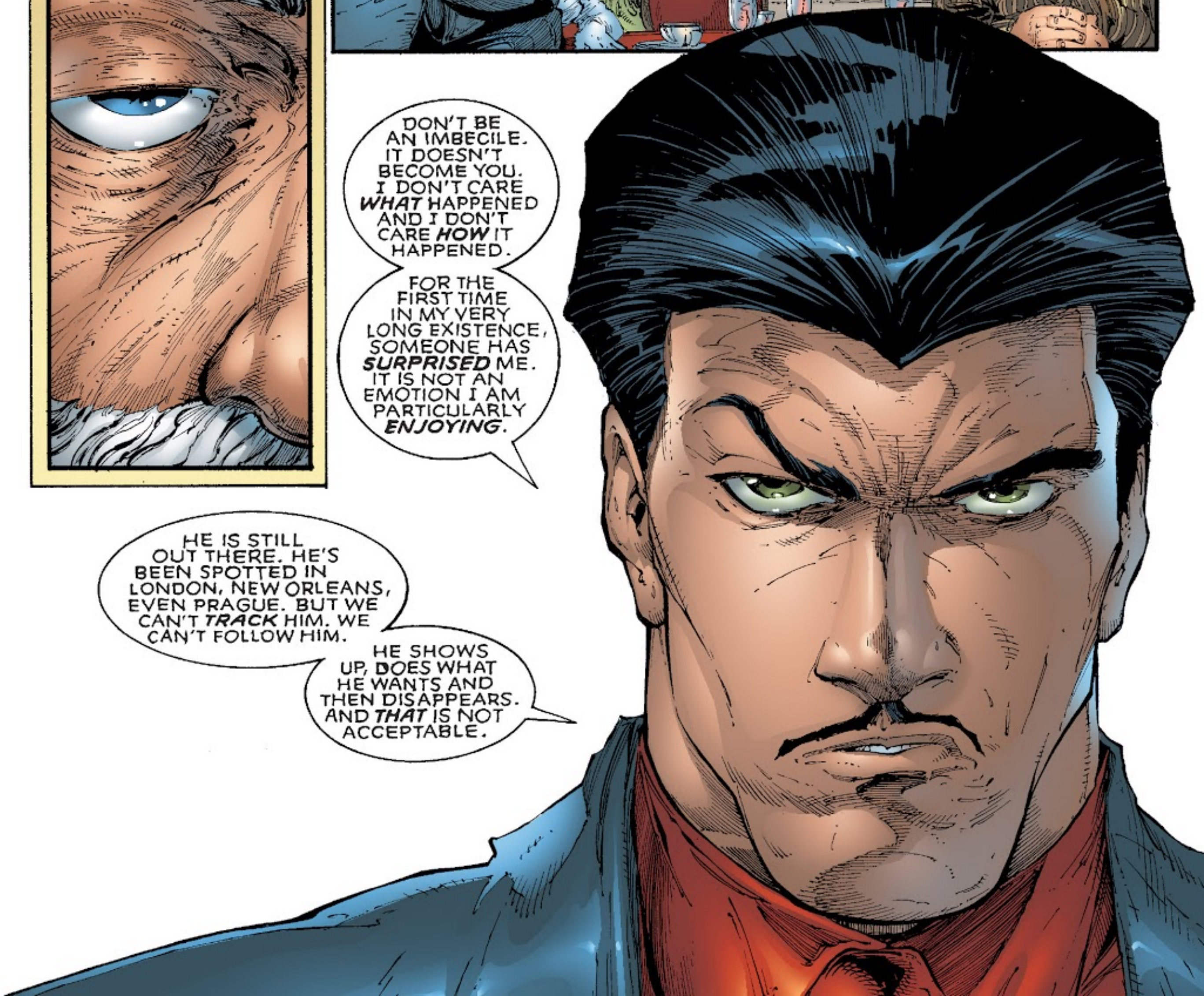
AND I TOLD YOU, I DON'T KNOW. HE VANISHED IN THAT BLAZE. THERE WERE NO REMAINS. PERHAPS HE'S **DEAD**.

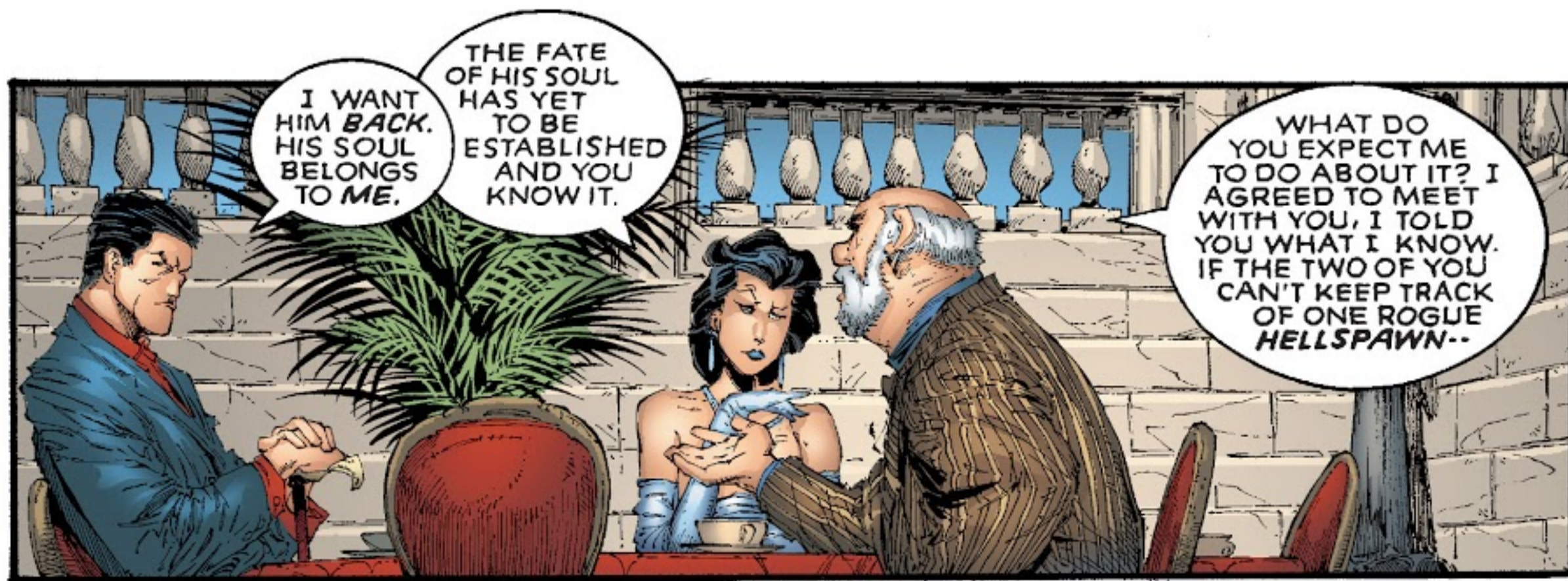
DON'T BE AN IMBECILE. IT DOESN'T BECOME YOU. I DON'T CARE **WHAT** HAPPENED AND I DON'T CARE **HOW** IT HAPPENED.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY VERY LONG EXISTENCE, SOMEONE HAS **SURPRISED** ME. IT IS NOT AN EMOTION I AM PARTICULARLY **ENJOYING**.

HE IS STILL OUT THERE. HE'S BEEN SPOTTED IN LONDON, NEW ORLEANS, EVEN PRAGUE. BUT WE CAN'T **TRACK** HIM. WE CAN'T FOLLOW HIM.

HE SHOWS UP, DOES WHAT HE WANTS AND THEN DISAPPEARS. AND **THAT** IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.





I WANT HIM *BACK*. HIS SOUL BELONGS TO ME.

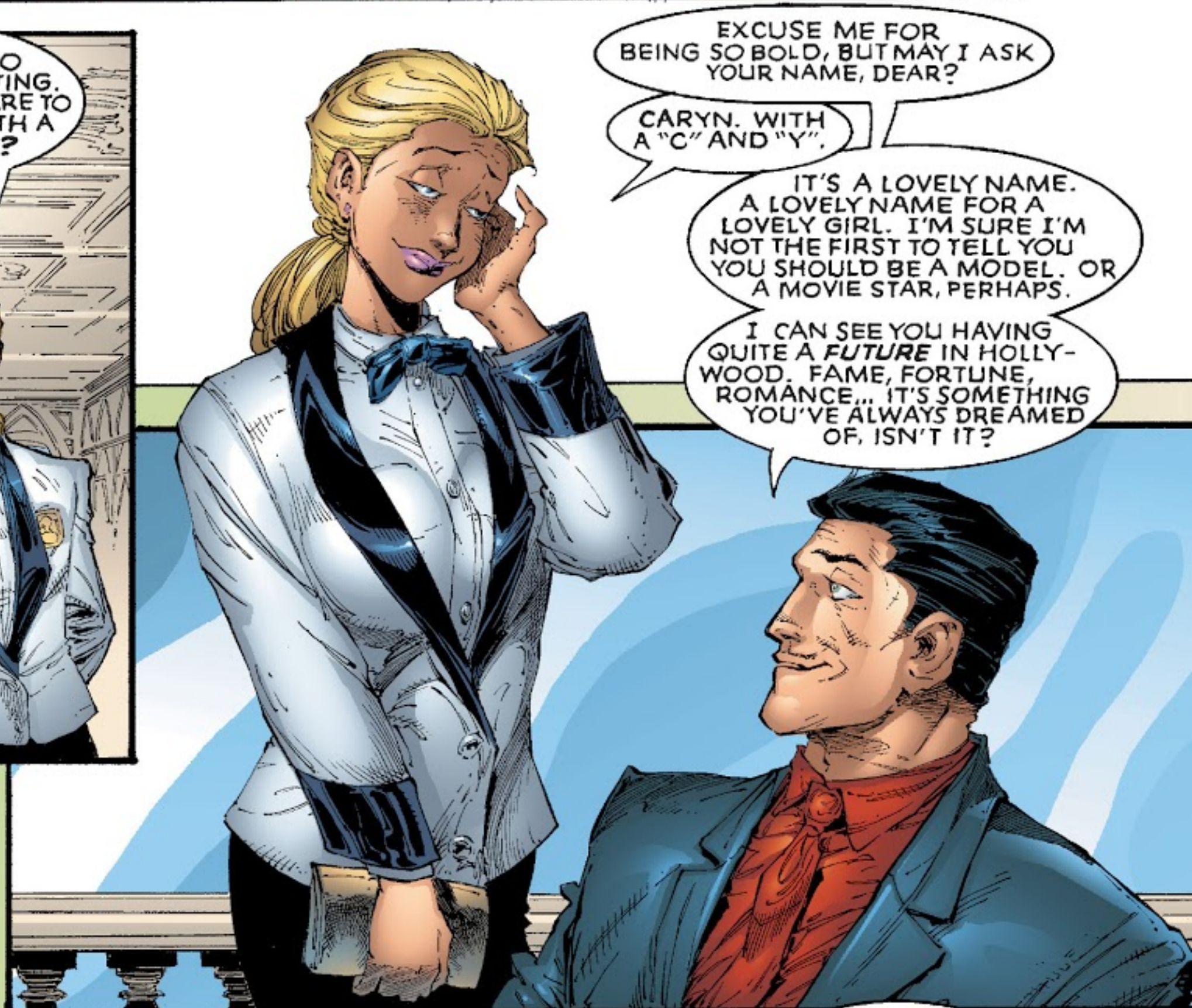
THE FATE OF HIS SOUL HAS YET TO BE ESTABLISHED AND YOU KNOW IT.

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DO ABOUT IT? I AGREED TO MEET WITH YOU, I TOLD YOU WHAT I KNOW. IF THE TWO OF YOU CAN'T KEEP TRACK OF ONE ROGUE *HELLSPAWN*--



I'M SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING. WOULD YOU CARE TO START OFF WITH A *COCKTAIL*?

I KNOW I WOULD.

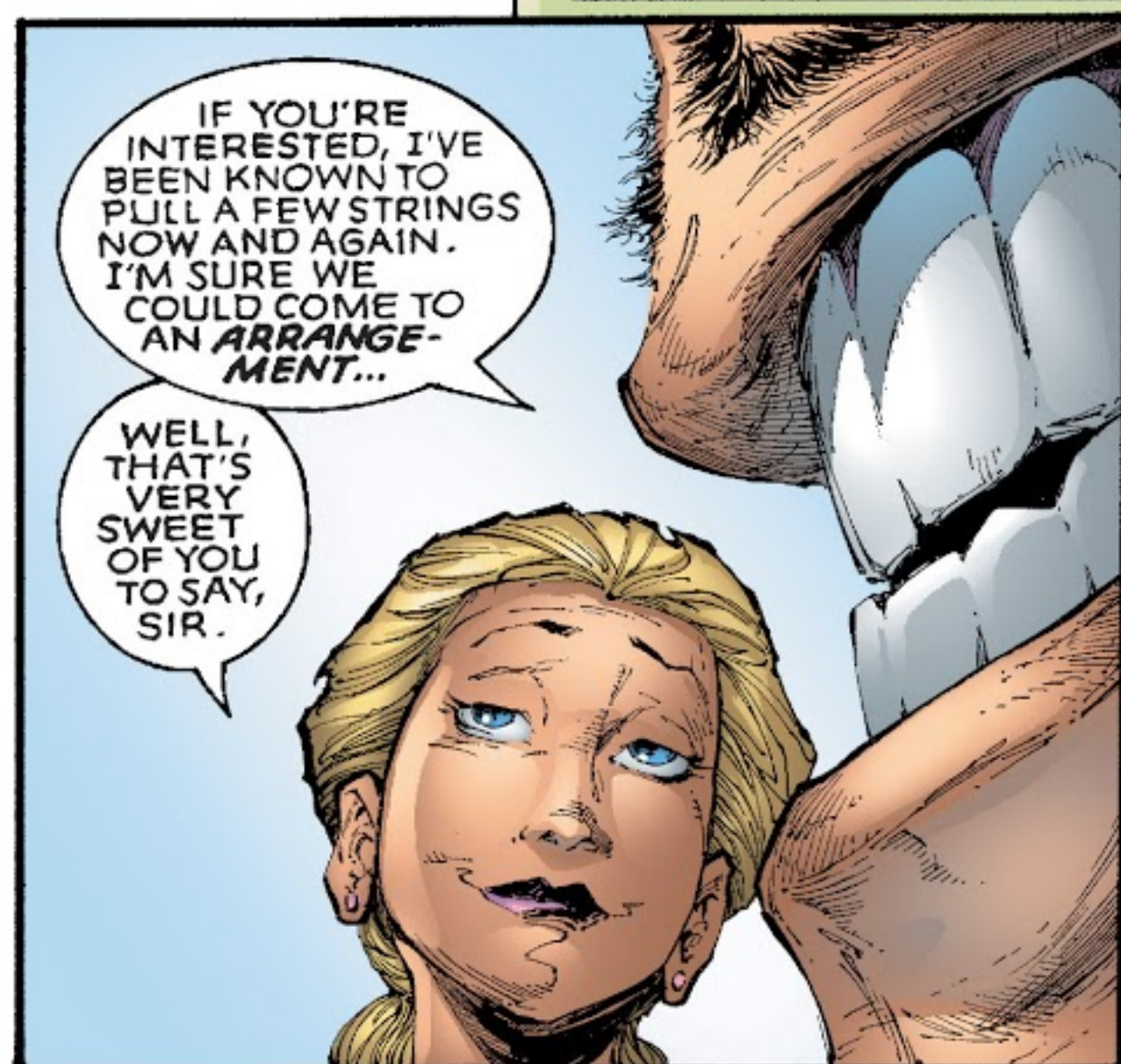


EXCUSE ME FOR BEING SO BOLD, BUT MAY I ASK YOUR NAME, DEAR?

CARYN. WITH A "C" AND "Y".

IT'S A LOVELY NAME. A LOVELY NAME FOR A LOVELY GIRL. I'M SURE I'M NOT THE FIRST TO TELL YOU YOU SHOULD BE A MODEL. OR A MOVIE STAR, PERHAPS.

I CAN SEE YOU HAVING QUITE A *FUTURE* IN HOLLYWOOD. FAME, FORTUNE, ROMANCE... IT'S SOMETHING YOU'VE ALWAYS DREAMED OF, ISN'T IT?



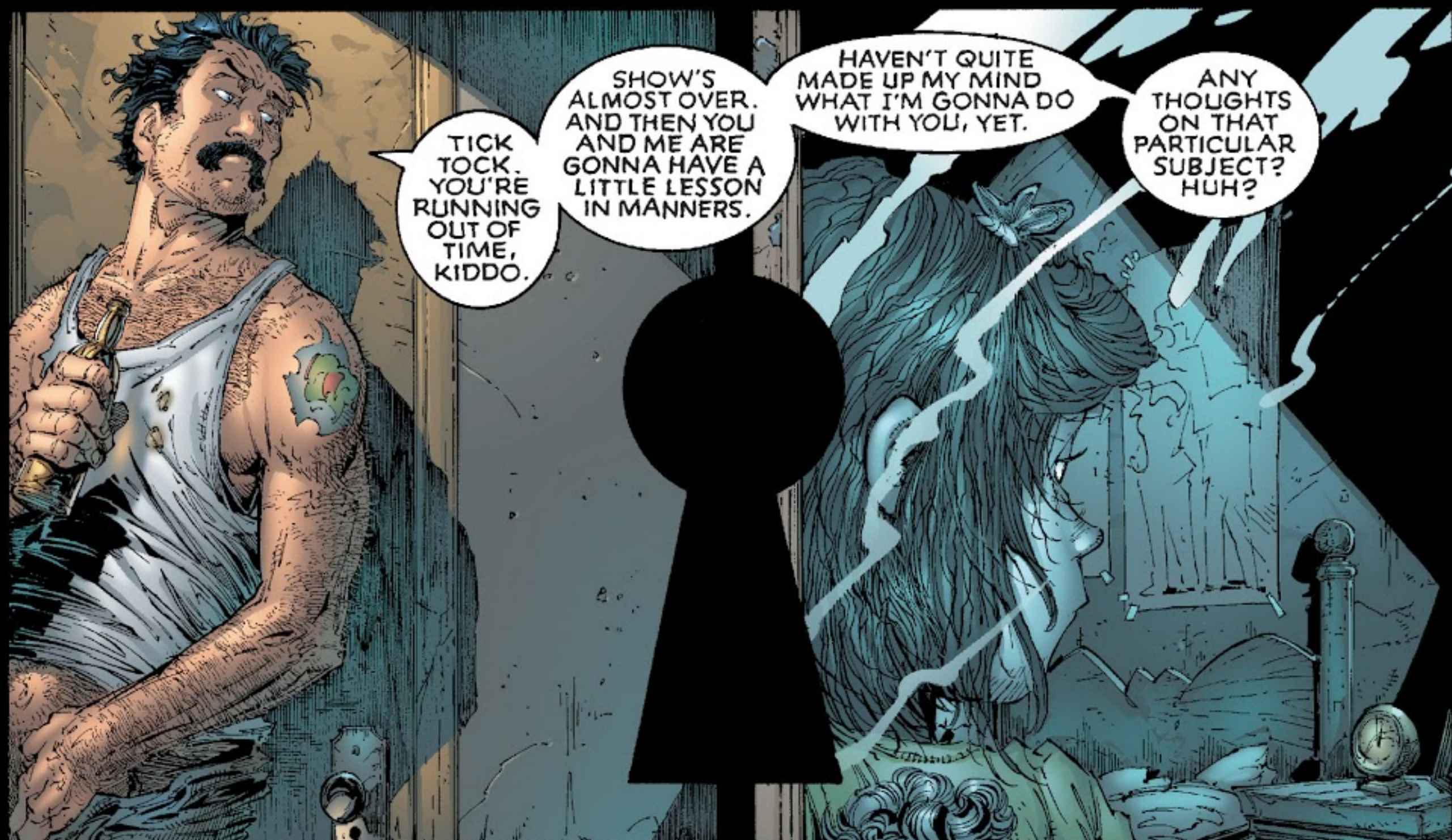
IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, I'VE BEEN KNOWN TO PULL A FEW STRINGS NOW AND AGAIN. I'M SURE WE COULD COME TO AN *ARRANGEMENT*...

WELL, THAT'S VERY SWEET OF YOU TO SAY, SIR.



EXCUSE ME, MISS, BUT IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU, YOU'LL JUST TAKE OUR ORDERS, SMILE POLITELY AND IGNORE EVERY WORD THIS GENTLEMAN UTTERS. I HOPE THAT'S CLEAR.

YES, MA'AM.

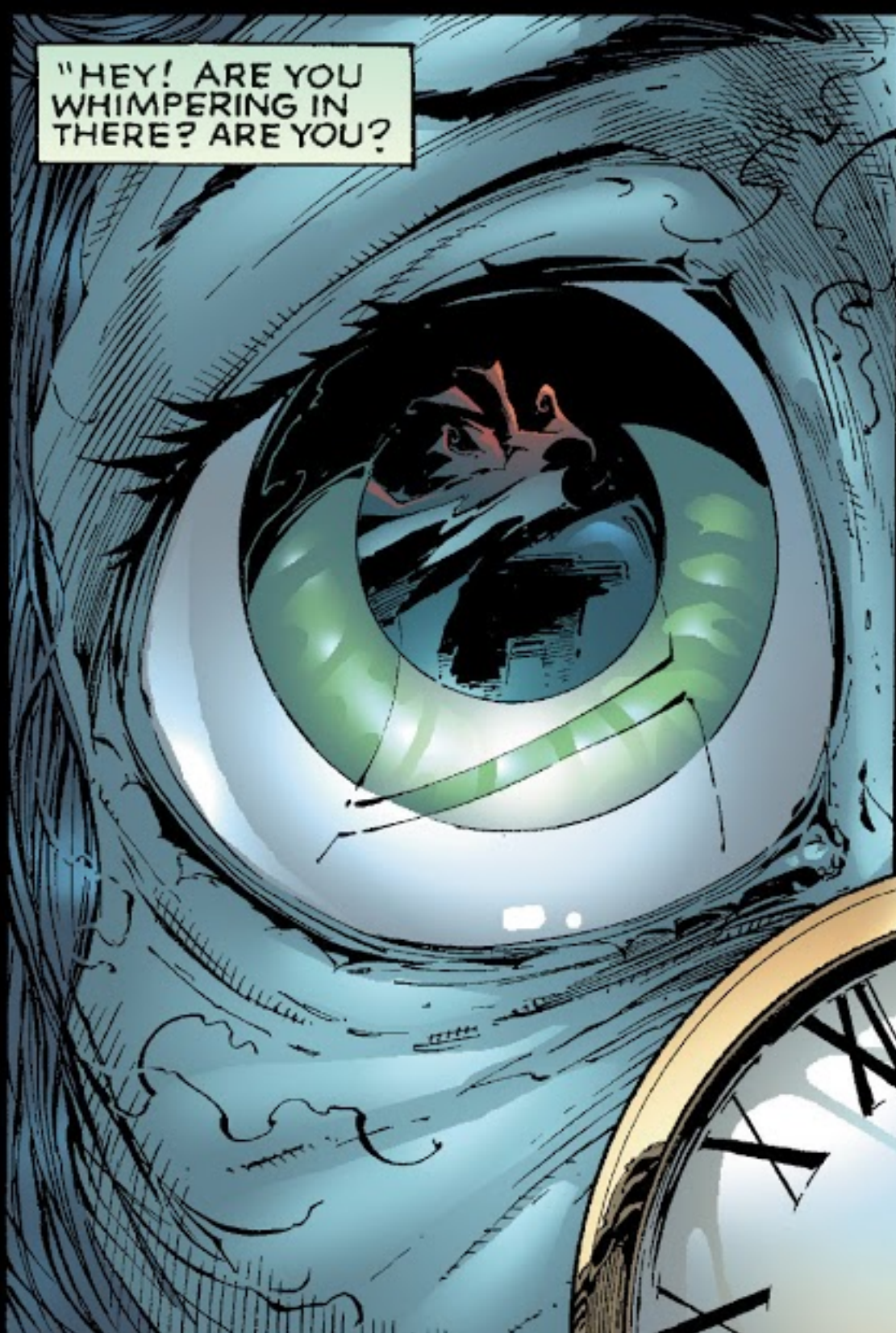


TICK
TOCK.
YOU'RE
RUNNING
OUT OF
TIME,
KIDDO.

SHOW'S
ALMOST OVER.
AND THEN YOU
AND ME ARE
GONNA HAVE A
LITTLE LESSON
IN MANNERS.

HAVEN'T QUITE
MADE UP MY MIND
WHAT I'M GONNA DO
WITH YOU, YET.

ANY
THOUGHTS
ON THAT
PARTICULAR
SUBJECT?
HUH?



"HEY! ARE YOU
WHIMPERING IN
THERE? ARE YOU?"



"SAVE YOUR BREATH,
SUNSHINE. IT WON'T
DO YOU NO GOOD.



"THIS TIME YOU'RE GONNA
FACE THE CONSEQUENCES
OF YOUR ACTIONS. DON'T
THINK YOU CAN TALK YOUR
WAY OUTTA THIS ONE, LIKE
YOU DO WITH YOUR MOMMA.

"THIS TIME I GOT YOU
ALL TO MYSELF. AIN'T
NO ONE COMING TO
YOUR *RESCUE*."

STUPID BITCH.

Momma says she's sorry about the way Seth can be.

WHAT THE HELL...?

But deep down she says he's a good man and he loves us.

HEY KID, WAS THAT YOU?

CREAK

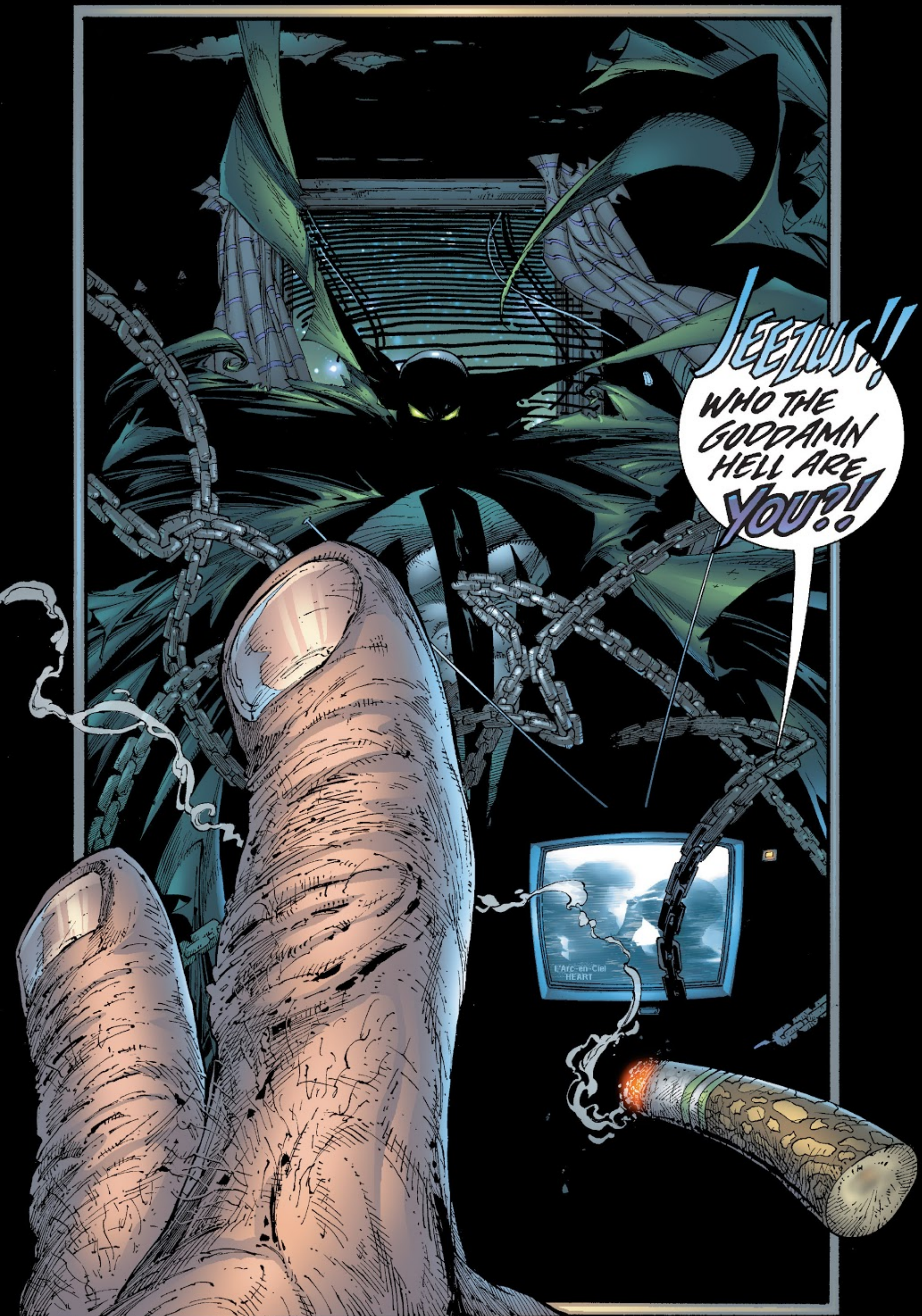
YOU BETTER NOT BE OUT OF YOUR ROOM. YOU'RE IN ENOUGH TROUBLE AS IT IS. I SWEAR TO GOD, IF YOU'RE **DISOBEYING** ME...

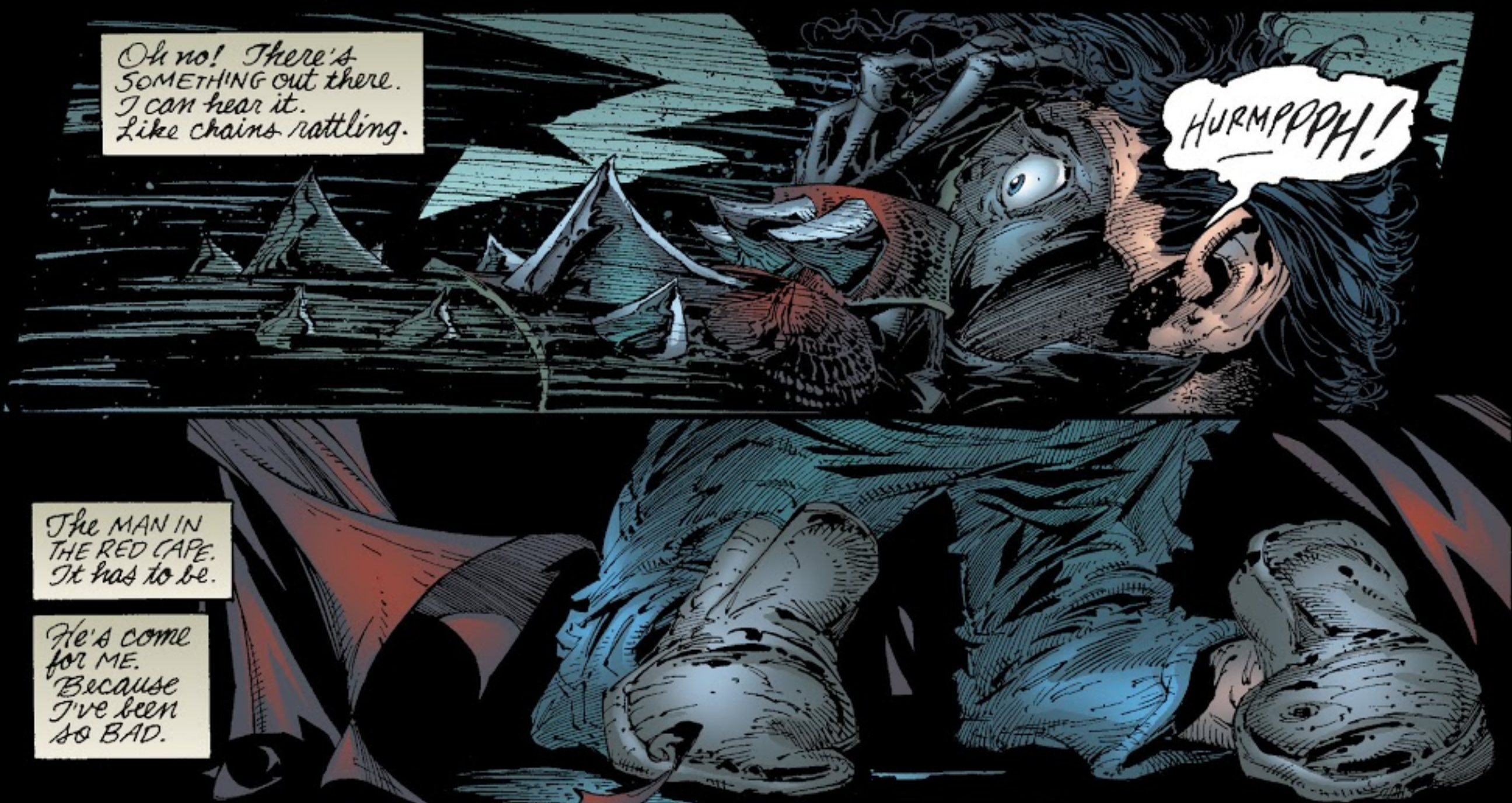
That's why he's so hard on me. He only wants what's best for me.

I've got to learn that the world doesn't revolve around me. I'll never make anything of myself if I don't shape up.

He's only trying to teach me a LESSON.

Huh?





Oh no! There's
SOMETHING out there.
I can hear it.
Like chains rattling.

HURMPPPH!

The MAN IN
THE RED CAPE.
It has to be.

He's come
for ME.
Because
I've been
so BAD.



Seth told me some-
times the BOOGIE MAN
comes in the night
and takes naughty
little girls away and
chops them up for
being disrespectful.

He said he
was coming
for me, but
I didn't
believe him.

I don't want to
be chopped up.
I'm so SCARED.
Why didn't I
just look where
I was going?



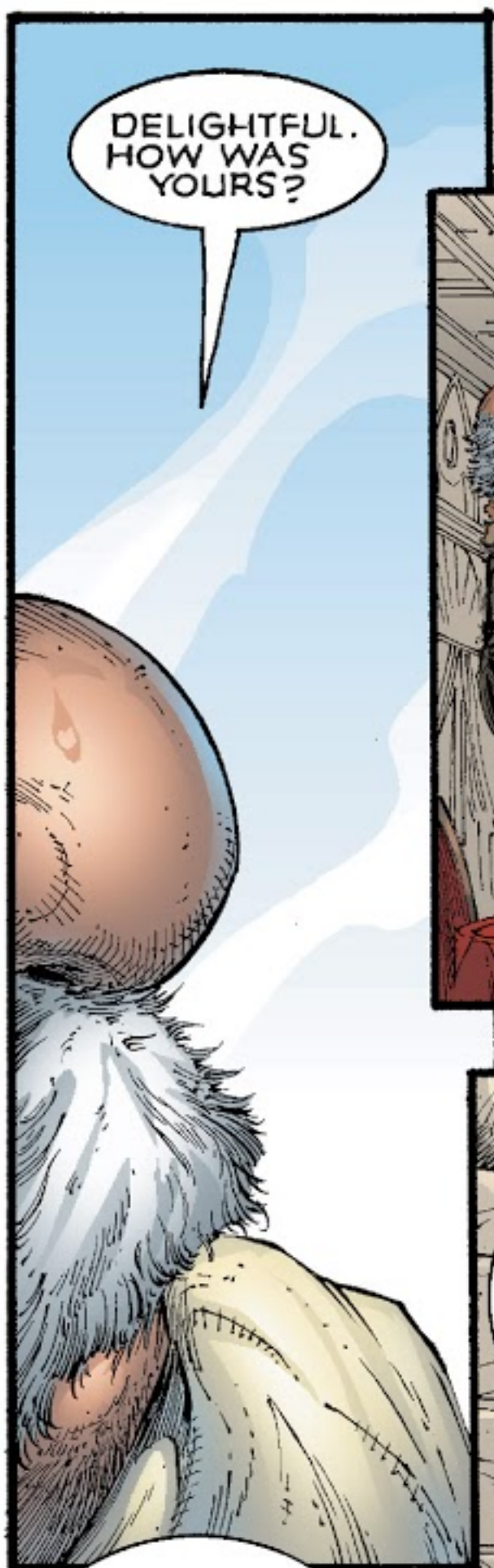
I want my
mommy. I want
Seth. Anybody.

I want my
Molly.



Where
is she?

Where's
my
MOLLY?!



DELIGHTFUL.
HOW WAS
YOURS?



YOU SHOULD
SEE YOUR FACES.
YOU LOOK LIKE
A DOG RAN AWAY
WITH YOUR FOOT-
BALL AND NOW
YOU CAN'T *PLAY*
ANYMORE.

YOU'VE BEEN
DRINKING TOO
MUCH, COGLIOSTRO.
A COMMON HUMAN
WEAKNESS. I'D
HAVE THOUGHT
YOU ABOVE IT.

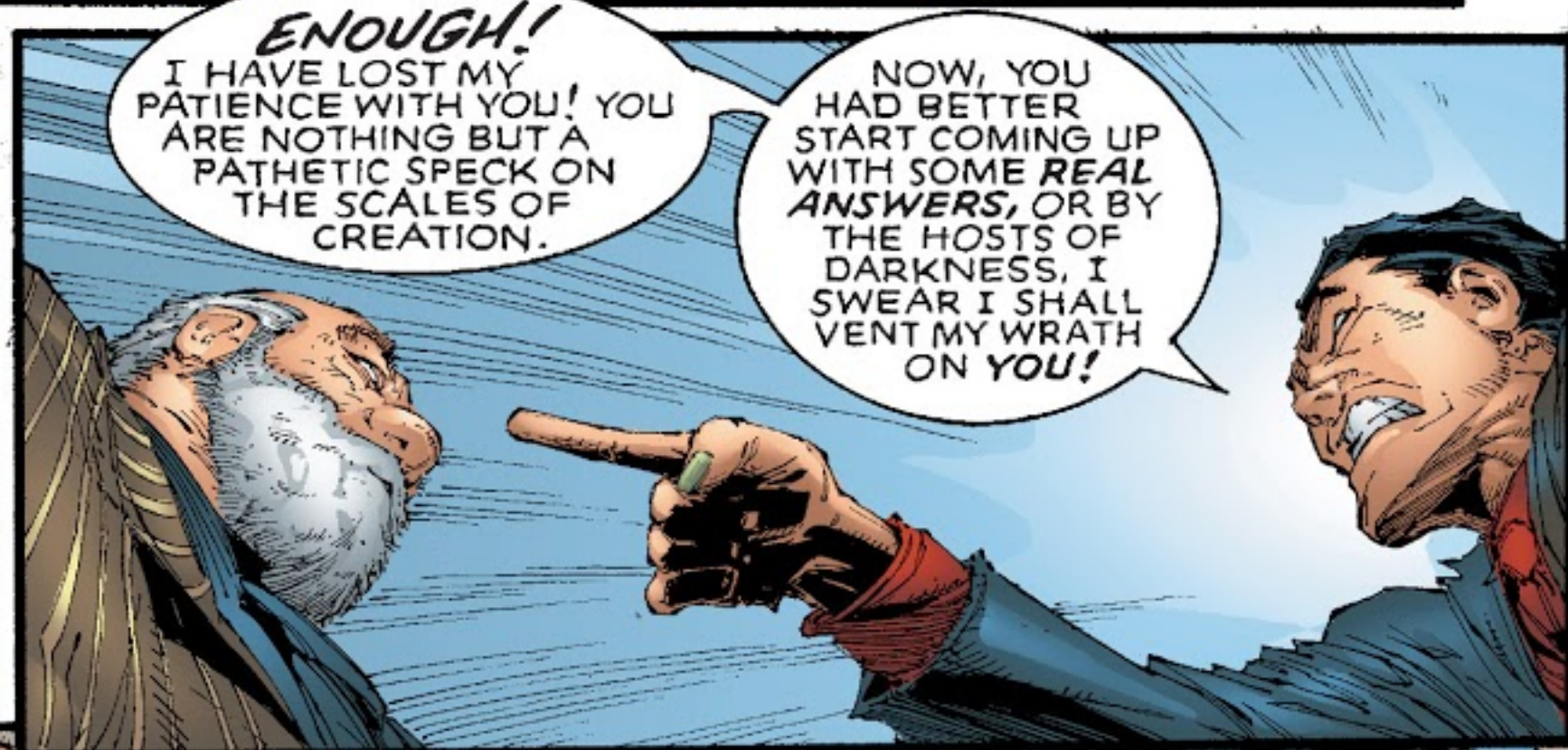
Ah, BUT YOU KNOW
I'M *RIGHT*. *SPAWN* WAS
THE CENTERPIECE OF YOUR
LITTLE *ARMAGEDDON*.
WITHOUT HIM, YOU'RE
RATHER UP A TREE,
AREN'T YOU?

TO BE
HONEST, I WASN'T
SURE HE HAD IT IN
HIM. BUT I SAY, GOOD
FOR HIM. BRAVO,
SPAWN! IT'S ABOUT
TIME SOMEONE
TAUGHT YOU ARRO-
GANT TOSSERS A
LESSON, SHOOK
YOU UP A BIT.



DO NOT
MAKE LIGHT
OF THE SITUATION.
WE ARE TALKING
ABOUT AN
ENORMOUSLY
DELICATE BALANCE
OF POWER. WE
ARE TALKING
ABOUT THE
WILL OF
GOD!

WELL,
PERHAPS
THE WILL OF
GOD ISN'T QUITE
WHAT IT USED
TO BE.



ENOUGH!
I HAVE LOST MY
PATIENCE WITH YOU! YOU
ARE NOTHING BUT A
PATHETIC SPECK ON
THE SCALES OF
CREATION.

NOW, YOU
HAD BETTER
START COMING UP
WITH SOME *REAL*
ANSWERS, OR BY
THE HOSTS OF
DARKNESS, I
SWEAR I SHALL
VENT MY WRATH
ON YOU!

DON'T
THREATEN ME,
FRIEND. YOU
KNOW I AM
OFF-LIMITS. A
DEAL'S A DEAL.
EVEN WITH
YOU.

IS THAT
A FACT?



AND HERE I WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT WE WERE NO LONGER *PLAYING* BY THE RULES.

I WASH MY HANDS OF YOU, COGLIOSTRO. YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN NOW, AND I FEAR YOU WILL FIND NO HARBOR TO GIVE YOU SHELTER.

I WANT THE **HELLSPAWN**. I WANT WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY MINE. IF YOU CANNOT DELIVER HIM WITHIN A FORTNIGHT, I PROMISE YOU THE **CHARGES OF HELL** WILL HOUND YOU TO THE ENDS OF **CREATION**.

DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR?



GOOD NIGHT.

WELL, THAT ALL WENT RATHER BADLY, DIDN'T IT?

DID YOU ENJOY YOUR MEAL, SIR?

IT WAS PASSABLE.

Um... LISTEN... WHAT YOU WERE SAYING EARLIER... uh... ABOUT MY **FUTURE**.

I'M GOING TO DO YOU THE **FAVOR** OF BEING PERFECTLY **HONEST** WITH YOU, CARYN...



TWO WEEKS AFTER YOUR TWENTY-SIXTH BIRTHDAY, YOU WILL GO TO THE DOCTOR BELIEVING YOU ARE PREGNANT. INSTEAD YOU WILL BE SHOCKED TO LEARN YOU HAVE OVARIAN CANCER.

AT FIRST, THE DOCTORS WILL BE HOPEFUL. BUT THE CANCER WILL METASTASIZE RAPIDLY, SPREADING THROUGHOUT YOUR YOUNG BODY. YOUR BOYFRIEND WILL ABANDON YOU ONCE THINGS GET BAD.

WITHIN SEVEN MONTHS YOU WILL DIE ALONE, NEVER HAVING MARRIED OR BIRTHED A CHILD OR HAVING DONE ANYTHING REMOTELY MEANINGFUL WITH YOUR LIFE.

THAT, MY DEAR, IS YOUR **FUTURE**.

HAVE A PLEASANT EVENING.





LOOK,
I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
YOU WANT, BUT
WHATEVER IT IS,
JUST TAKE IT
AND GET
OUTTA HERE.
OKAY?

I HAVEN'T
SEEN YOUR
FACE BUDDY,
SO I CAN'T
IDENTIFY YOU
OR NOTHING...
JUST-- JUST
DON'T
HURT ME!
PLEASE!



YOU WANT
MY WALLET? IT'S
RIGHT THERE ON
THAT TABLE. I AIN'T
GOT MUCH, BUT YOU
TAKE IT, OKAY? WE
COOL? WHATEVER
YOU WANT. AND
THEN WE'LL JUST
FORGET ALL
ABOUT THIS.



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?
Huh? GET
BACK!

WHAT
THE HELL
DO YOU
WANT
FROM
ME?!

**HELP!
HELP!
SOMEONE
PLEASE HELP
ME! CALL
THE COPS!
HELP!!**

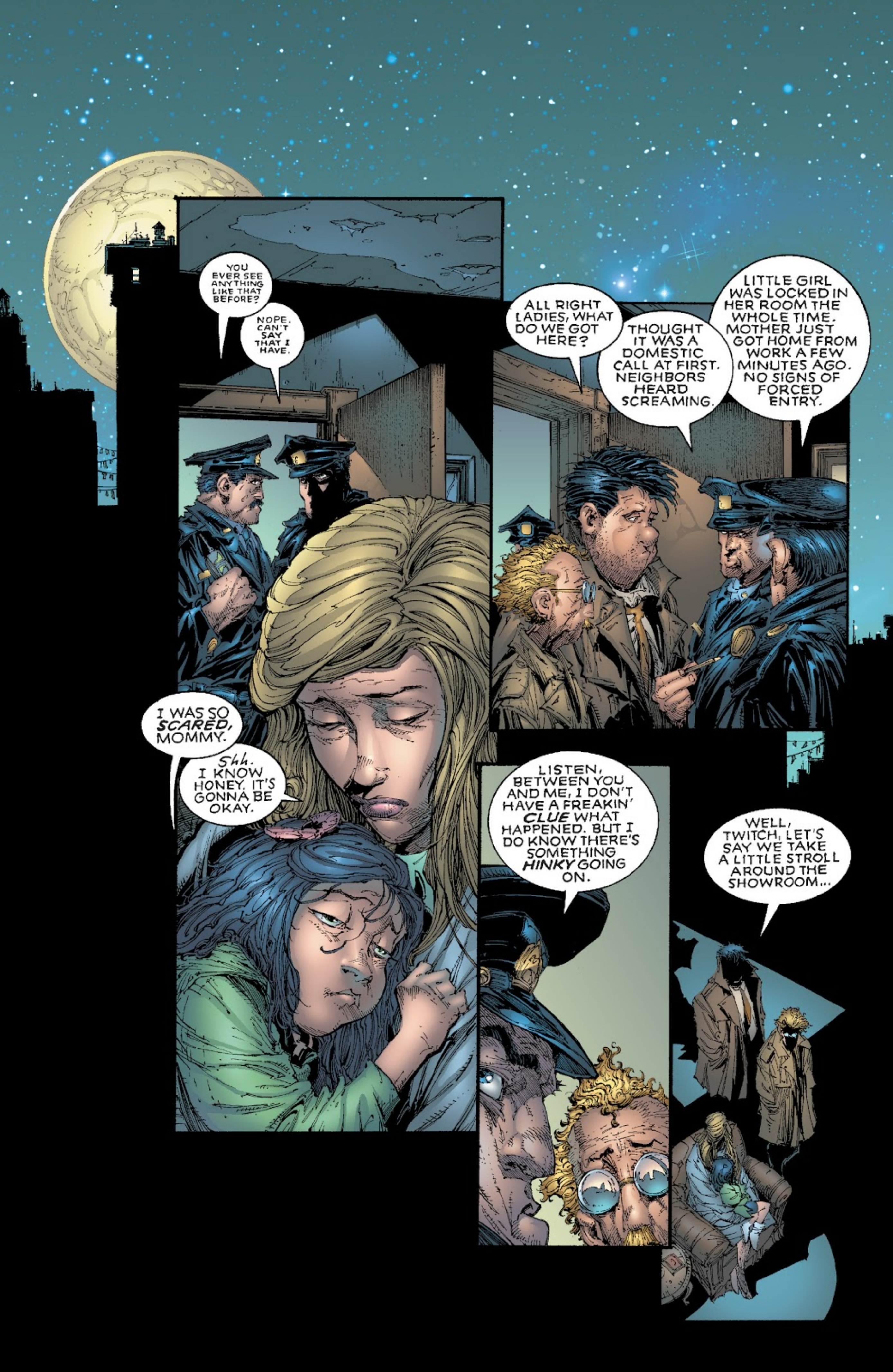
Ok,
JEEZ.
NO...

I WASN'T
GOING TO HURT
HER. I SWEAR.
JUST TRYING TO
TEACH HER SOME
RESPECT, YOU
KNOW?

YOU
BELIEVE
ME,
DON'T
YOU?

I MEAN,
YOU KNOW
KIDS TODAY.
YOU'VE GOTTA
BE FIRM, RIGHT?
I SWEAR I WAS
JUST GOING TO
SCARE HER. YOU
KNOW, TEACH
HER A
LESSON.





YOU
EVER SEE
ANYTHING
LIKE THAT
BEFORE?

NOPE.
CAN'T SAY
THAT I
HAVE.

ALL RIGHT
LADIES, WHAT
DO WE GOT
HERE?

THOUGHT
IT WAS A
DOMESTIC
CALL AT FIRST.
NEIGHBORS
HEARD
SCREAMING.

LITTLE GIRL
WAS LOCKED IN
HER ROOM THE
WHOLE TIME.
MOTHER JUST
GOT HOME FROM
WORK A FEW
MINUTES AGO.
NO SIGNS OF
FORCED
ENTRY.

I WAS SO
SCARED,
MOMMY.

Shh.
I KNOW
HONEY. IT'S
GONNA BE
OKAY.

LISTEN,
BETWEEN YOU
AND ME, I DON'T
HAVE A FREAKIN'
CLUE WHAT
HAPPENED. BUT I
DO KNOW THERE'S
SOMETHING
HINKY GOING
ON.

WELL,
TWITCH, LET'S
SAY WE TAKE
A LITTLE STROLL
AROUND THE
SHOWROOM...



WELL, MY *BEST* GUESS IS THAT THIS FINE, UPSTANDING CITIZEN HERE HAD A LITTLE TOO MUCH TO DRINK. HE TRIPS ON THE DOLL, HURTTLES FORWARD AND IMPALES HIMSELF ON THE TELEVISION AERIAL.

MY THOUGHTS, EXACTLY. FINE POLICE WORK, DETECTIVE.

THANK YOU, DETECTIVE.



WE'RE LABELING THIS AN ACCIDENT. WAIT TILL THE MEAT WAGON COMES FOR THE BODY AND THEN YOU CAN LEAVE.

SERIOUS? POOR BASTID ENDS UP AS A HUMAN KEBOB AND YOU'RE THINKING MIS-HAP? WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, SIR...

OFFICER, PLEASE. WE'VE BEEN AROUND. WE'VE SEEN THIS KIND OF THING BEFORE. IT'S ACTUALLY NOT AT ALL UN-COMMON.

YEAH. HAPPENS ALL THE TIME. HAPPENED TO MY COUSIN ONCE.

YOU GENTLEMEN HAVE A GOOD NIGHT NOW.

EXCUSE ME, YOUNG LADY. DOES THIS BY ANY CHANCE BELONG TO YOU?

Molly!

WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO US, DETECTIVE?

I THINK WE'VE GOT A GOOD IDEA WHAT REALLY HAPPENED, MA'AM. NOTHING YOU NEED WORRY ABOUT. DO YOU HAVE SOME PLACE YOU CAN STAY TONIGHT?



I didn't tell
my mommy
about the man
in the cape.
Or about the
kids in my
closet.

Or about losing my Molly.
I think it's okay not to tell her.

Mommy says
things are going
to be different
now. Better.
I believe her.

Maybe
God does
work in
mysterious
ways.

But He's not the only one.

SPAWN



image®

89

DIGITAL
EDITION

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CORNWALL, CONNECTICUT. AS THE LAST
FADING BEAMS OF SUNLIGHT FILTER
THROUGH THE BRIGHT SPRAYS OF
AUTUMN LEAVES...

JUDGE MASON EVERETT STERLING III
PULLS INTO THE DRIVEWAY OF HIS
SEVEN-BEDROOM, RED-BRICK
GOTHIC REVIVAL HOME.

AS HE
AMBLES UP
THE MARBLE
STEPS OF
THE ENTRY,
TODAY'S
CASE IS
STILL ON
JUDGE
STERLING'S
MIND.

A REMORSELESS BAND OF TEENAGE
REPROBATES, BLAMING THEIR ACTIONS ON
THE VAGUE FAILINGS OF "SOCIETY." JUDGE
STERLING WOULD HEAR NOTHING OF IT.

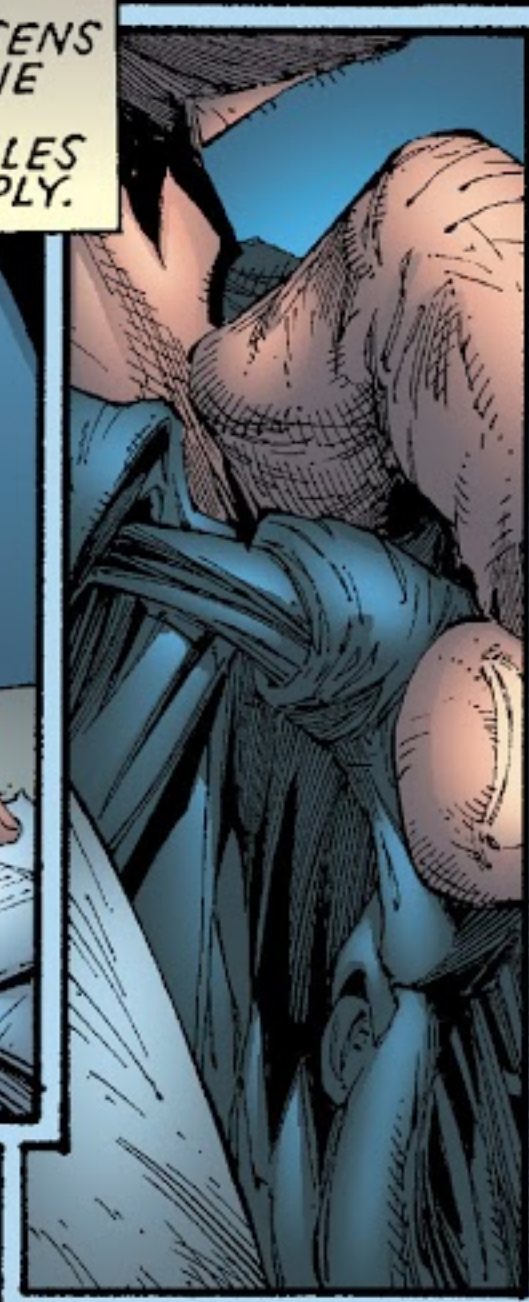
HE'S NEVER HAD MUCH TOLERANCE
FOR THAT SORT OF NONSENSE.
IT IS ACTION, NOT ATTITUDE, THAT
DEFINE A MAN'S CHARACTER.

SIMPLY PUT,
A MAN IS
WHAT HE
DOES.

HE SIFTS THROUGH THE DAY'S
MAIL: DINNER INVITATIONS,
REQUESTS FOR CHARITABLE
DONATIONS, THE USUAL.

HE
LOOSENS
HIS TIE
AND
INHALES
DEEPLY.

IT'S BEEN A
LONG WEEK FOR
JUDGE STERLING.
HE HAS EARNED
A LITTLE
RECREATION.





HELLO,
ANYBODY HERE?
SERAPHINA?

THE MAID AND THE
GARDENERS HAVE
ALREADY LEFT.
JUDGE STERLING
IS ALONE. HE CAN
RELAX NOW.

HE HAS ALWAYS FOUND SOMETHING VERY INVITING,
REASSURING ABOUT THE STUDY. THE WOOD PANELING
WAS HAND-CARVED A HUNDRED YEARS AGO FROM
INCH-THICK MAHOGANY.

LIGHT STREAMS
THROUGH LEADED
GLASS WINDOWS,
THROWING SMALL,
LEAPING RAINBOW
PATTERNS ON THE
WALLS.

THIS IS MY
SANCTUM,
HE THINKS
TO HIMSELF.
THE TEMPLE
OF THE
CIVILIZED
MAN.



HE POURS HIM-
SELF A DRINK.
THREE FINGERS
OF A RATHER
EXPENSIVE
SINGLE MALT
SCOTCH AND
TWO PERFECTLY
FORMED ICE
CUBES.

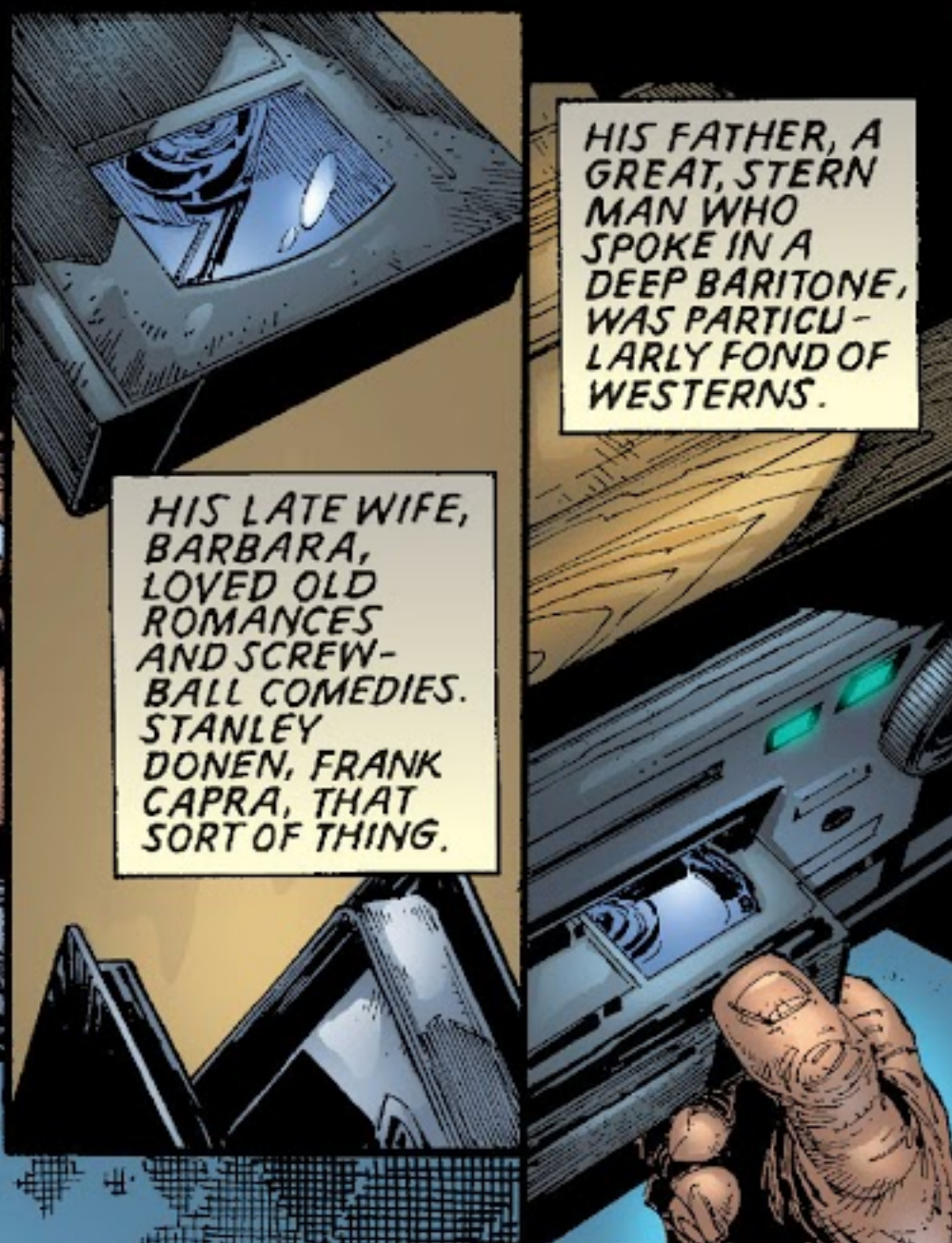


UNLOCKING A CABINET,
HE RIFLES THROUGH A
COLLECTION OF VIDEO
TAPES. JUDGE STERLING
BELIEVES YOU CAN
LEARN A LOT ABOUT A
PERSON BY HIS TASTE
IN FILMS.



HIS FATHER, A
GREAT, STERN
MAN WHO
SPOKE IN A
DEEP BARITONE,
WAS PARTICULARLY
FOND OF
WESTERNS.

HIS LATE WIFE,
BARBARA,
LOVED OLD
ROMANCES
AND SCREW-
BALL COMEDIES.
STANLEY
DONEN, FRANK
CAPRA, THAT
SORT OF THING.



JUDGE STERLING'S
OWN TASTES,
HOWEVER, ARE
RATHER MORE
SELECTIVE.



THE BOOZE PAINTS HIS THROAT, SMOKY YET SOOTHING. HIS WEEK-DAY LIFE OF COURT-HOUSE PRESSURES AND LYING CRIMINALS FADES INTO MEMORY.

THIS TAPE IS A NEW ONE. HE'S BEEN WAITING ALL WEEK TO VIEW IT. JUDGE STERLING IS A COLLECTOR WITH VERY SPECIALIZED TASTES.

HIS FAVORED SUBJECT MATTER IS VERY DIFFICULT TO COME BY. STILL, THROUGH A TIGHT NETWORK OF FELLOW CONNOISSEURS, HE HAS BEEN ABLE TO AMASS A SIZABLE LIBRARY.

THIS ONE'S QUITE GOOD, HE THINKS TO HIMSELF. THE GIRLS CAN'T BE OLDER THAN 11. THE BOY EVEN YOUNGER. THE SOUND IS RATHER POOR BUT THE PICTURE IS REASONABLY SHARP.

HE SINKS INTO THE RICH, WARM LEATHER OF THE COUCH. JUST WATCH. AND WAIT.

WAIT FOR THE GOOD PART...

WHAT WAS THAT?

FLICK.
KZZZT

WHO ARE YOU?
HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE?

TURN AROUND

MASON
STERLING...

IT IS
TIME FOR
YOU TO BE
JUDGED!



GET
OUT OF MY
HOUSE!
DO YOU
KNOW WHO
I AM?!

YOU ARE ON
MY PROPERTY!
THAT MEANS I
CAN DO *ANYTHING*
I WANT TO
YOU!

I CAN
SHOOT YOUR
BALLS OFF AND
STUFF THEM IN
YOUR MOUTH AND
STILL CALL IT SELF-
DEFENSE.

HIS VOICE IS
ALL BRAVADO,
BUT JUDGE
STERLING'S
OLD BONES
ARE SHAKING.

BLAM

BLAM

BLAM

HAH!
I GOT
HIM!

IT'S BEEN A
LONG TIME
SINCE HE'S
FIRED A GUN.
HE CAN'T
BELIEVE
HIS LUCK.

WHAT
THE
HELL IS
THIS?



NO. THE QUESTION IS, WHAT ARE YOU? YOU ARE A FOUL, TWISTED LITTLE MAN WHO PREYS VICARIOUSLY ON THE SUFFERING OF OTHERS.

I NEVER TOUCHED ANYONE. I SWEAR! ALL I DID WAS WATCH.



YOU PAID PEOPLE TO PROCURE THOSE TAPES FOR YOU. HOW DID YOU THINK THEY WERE GOING TO GET THEM?

YOU HAVE SUBSIDIZED THE PAIN AND DEBASEMENT OF OTHERS, ALL FOR YOUR OWN SICK AMUSEMENT.

AND NOW IT ENDS.



PLEASE,
JUST LET ME GO
AND I'LL NEVER DO
IT AGAIN. I SWEAR!
I CAN PAY YOU.
ANYTHING YOU
WANT. JUST LET
ME GO!

THERE
ARE THINGS
YOUR MONEY
CAN'T BUY YOU,
STERLING. YOU
KNOW WHAT HAS
TO HAPPEN
NOW, DON'T
YOU?



NO. PLEASE!
I'M BEGGING
YOU!



ALL
RIGHT...

WITH A SHAKY HAND,
JUDGE MASON
EVERETT STERLING III
TAKES A FIVE-HUNDRED
DOLLAR MONT-BLANC
FOUNTAIN PEN AND
WRITES OUT A
CONFESSION ON A
SHEET OF CREAM
COLORED STATIONERY.

IN IT, HE ENUMERATES
HIS SINS, LISTS THE
NAMES AND WHERE-
ABOUTS OF HIS
CO-CONSPIRATORS, AND
BEGS FORGIVENESS
FROM WHOMEVER
MIGHT BE KIND
ENOUGH TO GIVE IT.

WHEN HE IS FINISHED,
THE COLD STEEL
BARREL OF HIS HAND-
GUN IS PLACED
FLUSH AGAINST HIS
RIGHT TEMPLE.

BLAM!

AND A
SINGLE
ROUND
IS FIRED,
ECHOING
INTO THE
NIGHT.

NEW
YORK
CITY.

NIGHTTIME IN
MANHATTAN.



A SHADOW PLAY
OF ASPHALT AND
NEON, FLESH
AND FANTASY.



THE CITY IS
ALIVE AT
NIGHT. LIKE
SOME GREAT
MYTHIC
BEAST.

BREATHING.

STALKING.



TENSING
ITS
MUSCLES.



FEEDING ITS
APPETITES.



TOWERING
SKYSCRAPERS BEAR
SILENT WITNESS
AS COUNTLESS,
FRAGILE LITTLE
SOULS MINGLE AND
SEPARATE, FALL
TOGETHER AND
FALL APART.



THEY EXPERIENCE DELIGHT AND
LONELINESS AND HOPE AND TERROR,
AND BELIEVE NO ONE ELSE IN THE
WORLD CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT
THEY FEEL.



ABOVE IT
ALL, THE
HELL-
SPAWN
WATCHES,
LISTENING
TO THE
SHADOWS.

EVERYTHING IS
DIFFERENT
NOW.

THE DARKNESS
MOVES AROUND HIM,
EMBRACES HIM. BUT
IT ALSO MOVES
THROUGH HIM. IT IS
AN EXTENSION OF
HIM, AND HE OF IT.

AT ANY
GIVEN TIME,
HALF THE
WORLD IS IN
SHADOW.
WHEREVER
SHADOWS
FALL IS HIS
DOMAIN.

THERE'S
SOMETHING
OUT THERE
TONIGHT.
HIDING,
WAITING
FOR HIM.

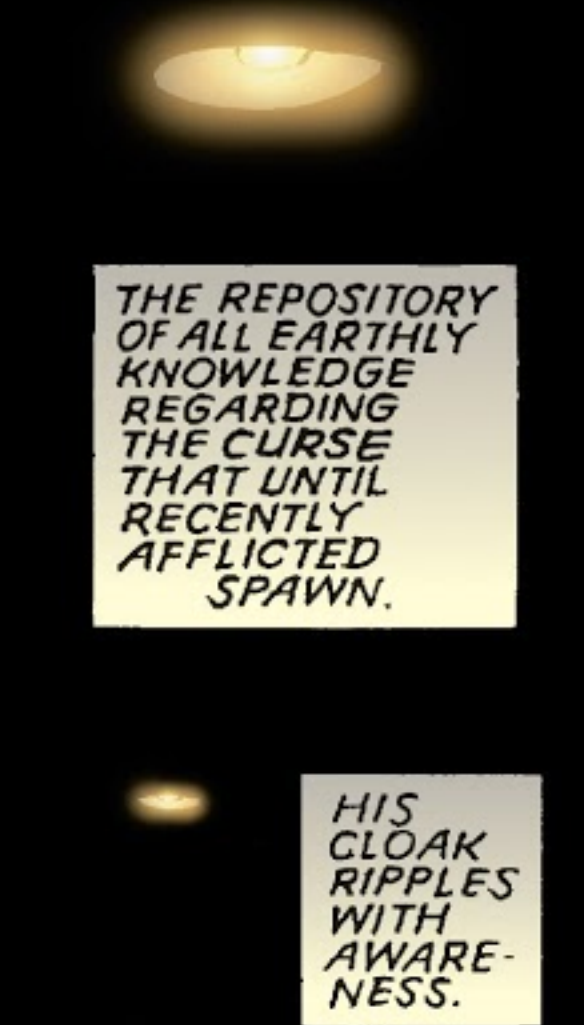
SOMEWHERE IN THE
NIGHT, A VIPER
IS NESTING.

HE SCANS
THE HORIZON.
"WHERE?
WHERE IS IT?"



THERE.

COGLIOSTRO'S
LIBRARY,
SECRETED
IN THE SUB-
BASEMENT
OF THE
NEW YORK
MUSEUM OF
ANTIQUITIES.



THE REPOSITORY
OF ALL EARTHLY
KNOWLEDGE
REGARDING
THE CURSE
THAT UNTIL
RECENTLY
AFFLICTED
SPAWN.

HIS
CLOAK
RIPPLES
WITH
AWARE-
NESS.



DOORS OPEN,
ALARMS FALL SILENT
AT HIS WHIM.

THE SHADOWS CALL HIM.





"AND THE
SUN TURNED
BLACK AS
SACKCLOTH, AND
THE OCEANS
CHURNED WITH
BLOOD..."



"AND
THROUGHOUT
ALL THE
NATIONS OF MEN,
THERE WAS GREAT
WAILING AND
GNASHING OF
TEETH..."



Oh, I
THINK
I QUITE
LIKE
THAT.

WHO
ARE
YOU?



I DON'T
THINK THERE'S
ANY NEED FOR
INTRODUCTIONS,
DO YOU?

MIDTOWN.

WHERE TO, MISS?

HERE'S AN ADDRESS.

FIRST TIME IN NEW YORK?

NO. NOT AT ALL. BUT IT HAS BEEN A WHILE. THINGS HAVE **CHANGED** QUITE A BIT SINCE I WAS HERE LAST.

THAT'S A FACT. SO, uh... BUSINESS OR PLEASURE? YOUR TRIP, I MEAN.

TO BE HONEST, I HAVEN'T QUITE WORKED THAT OUT YET. **BOTH**, I SUPPOSE, IF I MANAGE IT RIGHT.

GONNA HIT ALL THE TOURIST TRAPS? YOU SHOULD SEE WHAT THEY'VE DONE WITH TIMES SQUARE. YOU'D THINK THIS MILLENNIUM THING ONLY HAPPENED EVERY 1,000 YEARS.

ACTUALLY, I PLAN TO KEEP A PRETTY LOW PROFILE FOR THE TIME BEING. IN FACT, I'M SURE YOU'RE ALREADY FORGETTING MY FACE...



WHERE IS COG?



COGLIOSTRO, IF HE HAS ANY SENSE AT ALL, IS DIGGING HIMSELF A VERY DEEP HOLE IN THE MOST REMOTE QUARTER OF ANTARCTICA.

NOT THAT IT WILL HELP HIM ANY.

BUT HE IS NOT A CONCERN OF YOURS. YOU AND I, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE QUITE A BIT TO DISCUSS.



THERE'S NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT.



OK, BUT THERE IS. NOW, I DON'T THINK YOU UNDERSTAND EXACTLY WHAT YOU HAVE DONE, OR HOW DEEPLY THE RAMIFICATIONS OF YOUR ACTIONS RUN.

YOU HAVE CAUSED A GREAT DEAL OF DISCOMFORT TO A GREAT NUMBER OF PEOPLE. YOU ARE A CHILD PLAYING WITH MATCHES WHO IS DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO BURNING THE HOUSE DOWN.



BUT... LET'S LEAVE THAT ASIDE FOR A MOMENT. IT IS CLEAR THAT WE HAVE UNDERESTIMATED YOU. YOU ARE FAR MORE CLEVER THAN WE GAVE YOU CREDIT FOR.

BUT YOU **DID** MAKE A DEAL, AND IT IS ONE TO WHICH YOU **WILL** BE HELD. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?



SIMMONS MADE A DEAL. SIMMONS IS DEAD.

Oh, PLEASE. YOU DON'T THINK YOU ARE THE FIRST TO TRY THAT LITTLE LOOP-HOLE, DO YOU? I'M AFRAID IT DOESN'T WORK THAT WAY.

STILL, SITUATIONS BEING WHAT THEY ARE, I AM NOT AT ALL OPPOSED TO THE IDEA OF RE-NEGOTIATION.



YOU HAVE NOTHING TO OFFER ME.

OF COURSE I DO. I CAN GRANT YOU YOUR HEART'S DESIRE. WHAT WAS HER NAME? **WANDA**? VERY WELL, SHE SHALL BE YOURS. WHAT ELSE?



TRICKS. LIES.

OH, THAT'S RIGHT. YOU HAD A RATHER BAD EXPERIENCE WITH MY **ASSOCIATE**. I NEVER QUITE UNDERSTOOD WHY HE DOES THAT. I SUPPOSE HE THINKS IT'S FUNNY.

BUT I BELIEVE IN DEALING PLAINLY. IF **WANDA** IS WHAT YOU WANT, WHY NOT JUST **GIVE** HER TO YOU? IT'S A LOT SIMPLER IN THE LONG RUN.

THE FACT OF THE MATTER, DEAR BOY, IS THAT YOU ARE **IMPORTANT** TO US. TO **ME**. I WANT YOU TO BE HAPPY. PLEASE, TELL ME WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU...



YOU CAN GO BACK TO HELL AND ROT.



THAT WAS RATHER RUDE. WHY WOULD YOU SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT? ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE ME **ANGRY**? I DON'T THINK THAT'S WHAT YOU REALLY WANT TO DO.

YOU HAVE NO CONCEPT OF WHAT I AM. NO CONCEPT OF WHAT **POWER** I WIELD.

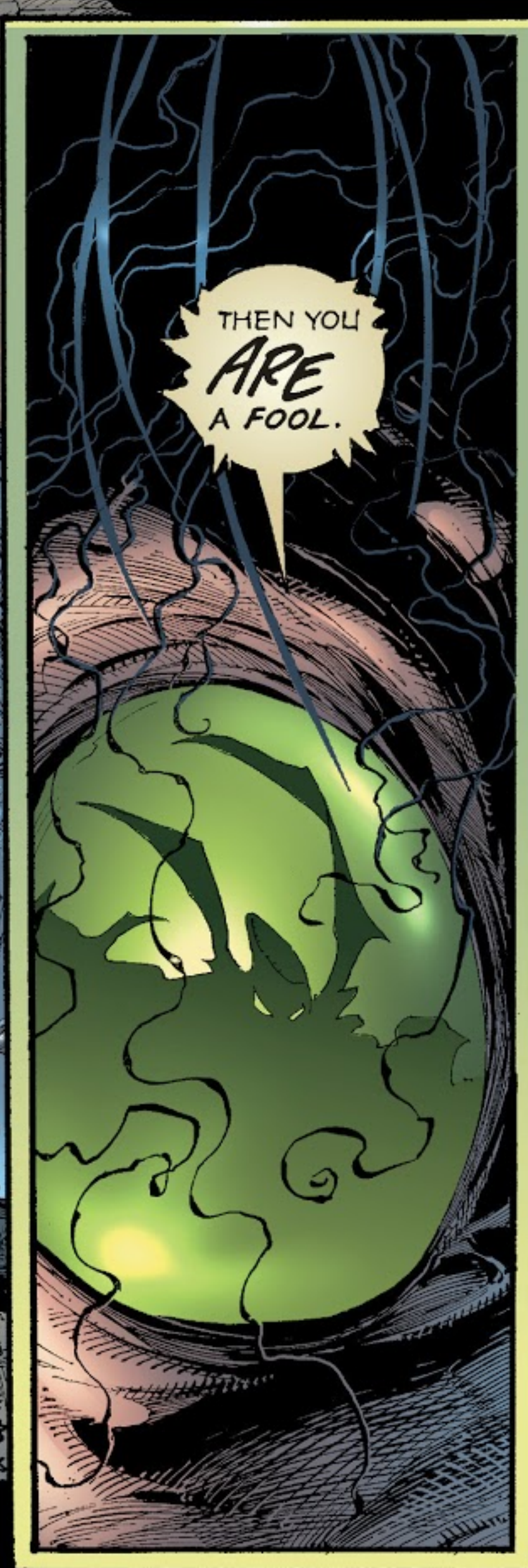


I AM OLDER THAN **MAN**. I AM OLDER THAN THIS PATHETIC **DIRT CLOD** WE ARE STANDING ON. I AM OLDER THAN **TIME**.

THERE IS NOTHING IN YOUR TINY "EXPERIENCE" THAT COULD POSSIBLY LEND YOU THE PROPER **PERSPECTIVE** AS TO WHAT YOU ARE DEALING WITH.

YOU ARE QUITE OUT OF YOUR LEAGUE, BOY. YOU MADE A DEAL, AND WE EXPECT YOU TO HONOR IT.

I'M NOT AFRAID OF **MALEBOLGIA** AND I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU.



THEN YOU **ARE** A FOOL.



MALEBOLGIA
IS A **FLEA**
BUZZING AROUND
MY EAR. BUT HE IS
MY FLEA. AND
WHATEVER IS HIS,
ULTIMATELY
BELONGS TO
ME.

YOU
BELONG
TO ME.

OR I CAN
BE VERY
GENEROUS.

I CAN
BE VERY
UNPLEASANT IF
THE MOOD STRIKES.
I CAN HEAP SUCH
MISERIES UPON YOU
THAT NO **WORDS**
IN YOUR PETTY
LITTLE LANGUAGE
COULD BEGIN
TO DESCRIBE
THEM.

YOU CAN GO
OFF AND CREATE
WHATEVER WORLDS
YOU LIKE IN YOUR OWN
IMAGE, POPULATE THEM
ALL WITH BILLIONS
OF "WANDAS." I
DON'T **CARE.**

BUT WHEN
THE TIME COMES,
YOU **MUST** DO WHAT
I ASK. I CAN GRANT
YOU YOUR EVERY
WISH OR I CAN
HURT IN WAYS
YOU'VE NEVER
IMAGINED.

I CAN
MAKE YOU
LORD OF THE
EIGHTH CIRCLE.
I'LL SERVE YOU
MALEBOLGIA'S
HEART ON A
PLATE IF THAT'S
WHAT YOU WANT.
I CAN MAKE
A **GOD** OUT
OF YOU.



BUT I
WILL **NEVER,**
EVER
LET YOU SLIP
FROM MY GRASP.
IS THAT
CLEAR?



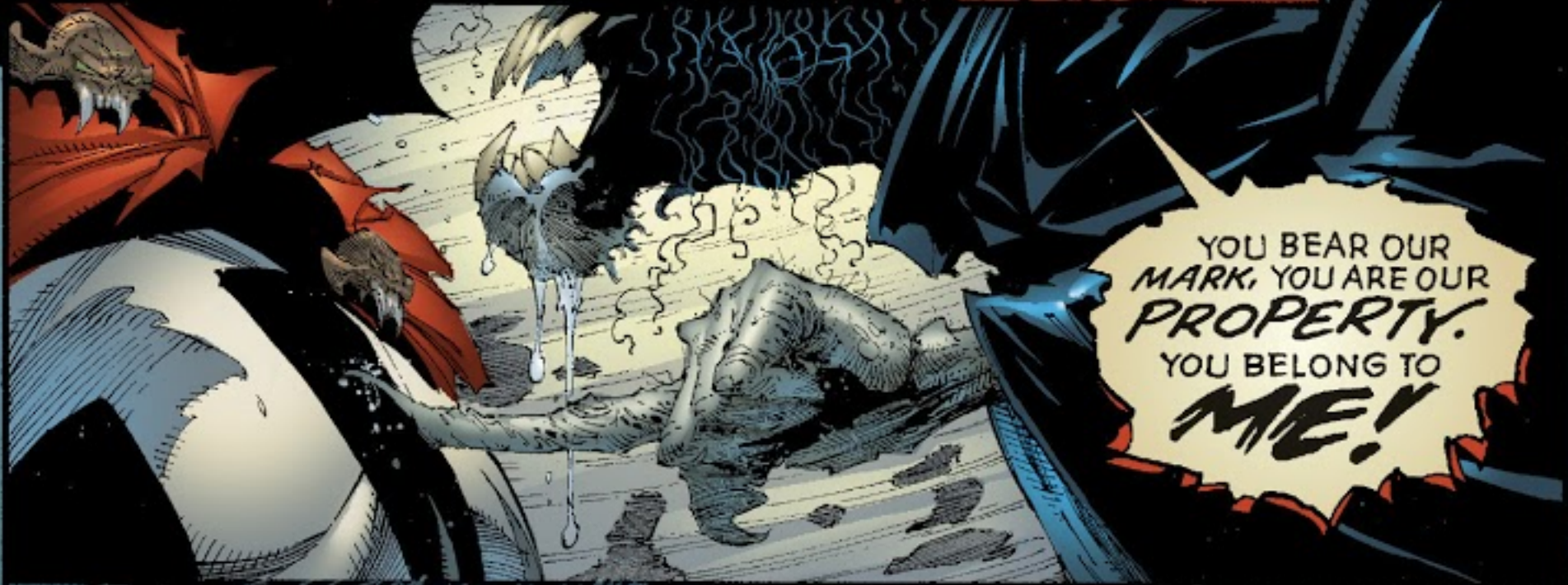
ARE YOU
SMIRKING
UNDER THAT
MASK? DO YOU
THINK THIS IS FUNNY?
LOOK AROUND YOU.
THIS IS THE
HISTORY OF
YOUR KIND.

**TEN
THOUSAND
GENERATIONS**
OF **HELLSPAWN**,
ALL BOUND FOREVER
IN THE CHAINS
OF **HELL**.

EACH ONE
SURE THEY
COULD SOMEHOW
ESCAPE THEIR FATE,
AND EVERY ONE WAS
WRONG. DO YOU
REALLY THINK
YOU'RE **THAT**
SPECIAL?



THERE IS BUT
ONE THING
IN THIS UNIVERSE
THAT CAN UNDO ME,
AND **YOU** ARE
NOT IT.



YOU BEAR OUR
MARK, YOU ARE OUR
PROPERTY.
YOU BELONG TO
ME!



NOW...
ARE YOU
GOING TO BE A
GOOD LITTLE
SOLDIER OR
NOT?





LOOK AT ME.
I DON'T BELONG
TO YOU. I DON'T
BELONG TO
ANYONE.

I DON'T GIVE
A DAMN ABOUT
YOUR LITTLE WAR.
I DON'T GIVE A
DAMN ABOUT THIS...
THIS HISTORY.
HISTORY BEGINS
NOW, WITH
ME.



DO
YOU
KNOW
WHAT
THIS
IS?



AH, I SEE YOU
DO. THE LANCE OF AN
ANGELIC HUNTRESS.
CHARGED WITH THE
LIGHT OF HEAVEN
ITSELF.

AAAAAH.
BUT HOW
CAN--

HOW CAN
I TOUCH IT
WITHOUT BEING
DESTROYED?
BECAUSE YOUR
RULES NO LONGER
APPLY TO ME.
AND NEITHER
DO THEIRS.



YOU DON'T
KNOW WHAT
I'VE BECOME.
YOU DON'T
KNOW WHAT I'VE
LEARNED. I'VE SEEN
THE TRUTH. AND
I KNOW YOUR
DIRTY LITTLE
SECRET.



THE ONE
HEAVEN AND
HELL HAVE BEEN
KEEPING FROM
MAN SINCE THE
DAWN OF TIME.

WE
DON'T
NEED YOU.
YOU NEED
US! ISN'T
THAT
RIGHT?

GET THAT
AWAY
FROM ME!



DON'T WET
YOURSELF.
I WON'T HAND
HEAVEN SUCH AN
EASY VICTORY.
BUT I WANT YOU
TO REMEMBER
THAT I COULD
HAVE.



AND AS A
REMINDER...



FROM
NOW,
UNTIL THE
END OF
TIME...

YOU
SHALL WEAR
MY MARK!
AND ALL CREATION
WILL KNOW THAT
YOU **FAILED**
TO **BREAK**
ME!

AAAAH!



HOW DARE
YOU... HOW
DARE YOU! IF
WE WERE IN MY
REALM, I WOULD
REND YOUR SOUL TO
ATOMS FOR THIS...
AFFRONT!



BUT
WE'RE
NOT IN
YOUR REALM.
WE ARE IN
MINE.



LOOK AT
ME. I WANT
YOU TO REMEMBER
THE MAN WHO DID
THAT TO YOU.
REMEMBER THIS
DAY AND KNOW
THAT YOU ARE NOT
WELCOME
HERE.



THIS
WORLD AND
ITS SHADOWS
BELONG TO ME NOW.
FROM NOW ON, MEN
SHALL ANSWER
TO THEIR OWN
CONSCIENCE. AND
WHEN THEY WILL
NOT, THEY SHALL
ANSWER
TO ME.



DO WE
UNDERSTAND
EACH OTHER?



GOOD.

LATER.

tsk tsk.
LOOK
AT THIS.

WHAT
A MESS
YOU BOYS
LEFT
BEHIND.

WELL, IT'S
ABOUT TIME
THINGS GOT
INTERESTING
AROUND
HERE.

NEXT:
THREE
USES
OF THE
KNIFE

